MEMORIES OF MEN & HORSES

By WILLIAM ALLISON

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MEMORIES
OF
MEN AND HORSES

In the Tropics. W. Allison,
February, 1922

MEMORIES
OF
MEN AND HORSES

BY
WILLIAM ALLISON
("*The Special Commissioner*")
AUTHOR OF
"MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE"

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS LTD.
ST MARTIN'S STREET
MDCCCCXXII

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TO

THE RIGHT HON.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K.G., K.T., P.C.

THE ONLY LIVING BREEDER OF

THREE DERBY WINNERS

THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED (WITH PERMISSION)

BY THE AUTHOR

M370190

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CHAPTER I

WHAT SHALL I WRITE?

Once more into the Breach!—"Labby" and his Ancestry—Concerning a Duel with "Labby"—Mr Manfield and his Boots—*The Pall Mall Gazette* and the Duel—Mr Labouchere mystified till the last

IT has been again and again pointed out to me that my book, *My Kingdom for a Horse*, which is a plain, unvarnished autobiography, might well be amplified in regard to its later stages, and this is no doubt true, but I am fearful of wearying my readers with anything in the nature of a rehash of what I have been writing for over thirty years week by week in *The Sportsman*. One kindly American lady has written to me from Lexington suggesting that *all* those *Sportsman* articles should be collected, and that they would be a "most interesting volume." Volume, indeed! Why, the volumes of all that stuff would be as numerous as those of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*! Moreover, who could write twice or three times a week, and often every day in the week, for thirty years without committing a lot of nonsense to paper at one time or another?

Nevertheless, what you have written, so long as you can refer to it, is useful as a refresher of memory, and in this sense I propose to recall some few points of interest.

How I ran that truculent Tory paper, *St Stephen's Review*, from the beginning of 1883 to the beginning of 1891 has been explained in the other book, so far

as it ever will be explained; but one of the tricks to obtain bold advertisement without the aid of capital has never yet been disclosed, and it was really one to which I still look back with amusement and pleasure.

Mr Labouchere was continually girding at *St Stephen's Review* in *Truth*, and having thought out a plan of campaign, I published the following verses, with Phil May's illustrations, on 15th August 1885:—

THE BANK OF LOVE

A Queer Story

Epaminondas Grabyourshare
Was not of birth or fortune rare;—
His origin I understand
Was from the Jews of Switzerland;
And he was born—they tell me so—
Perhaps a hundred years ago.

Epaminondas grew apace,—
He was a youth of little grace—
But all his friends agreed that he
Was very full of devilry;
And when he first gave fancy rope
He chanced to see a fair Miss Hope.
"This maiden is the sort for me,"
He cried aloud with bumptious glee.
She was a girl with whom to wed
The noblest duke might well have bled.
Her sire was wealthy without sham—
A banker he of Amsterdam—
And she returned the amorous stare
Of bold and bad young Grabyourshare

But stern necessity drew nigh
And bade the youth to work or die;
So sought he work—for he grew lank—
And hied to Gwillian Beacon's Bank.
The banking partners took him in—
They rather liked his cheeky grin—
And so he ranked—now only mark—
As under-sub-assistant clerk.

Epaminondas Grabyourshare
For such employment did not care;
With ledgers he disdained to cope,
But rather thought of fair Miss Hope;
And soon his prospects grew most dark
As under-sub-assistant clerk.

But so it chanced upon a day
His eye grew bright, his manner gay,
And to the partners quick he hied,
Who sat within their room inside.
"Good sirs," he cried, "I wish to be
A partner of your company!"

The startled bankers gazed aghast—
They thought his wits were gone at last.
"Absurd!" they cried; "it cannot be—
A partner YOU, with such as WE!
Your aid we very well can spare,
Epaminondas Grabyourshare."

"Well," said the youth, "that may be so,
But let me say before I go
The promised husband, sirs, I am
Of fair Miss Hope, of Amsterdam!"

"Oh," cried the banking partners, "oh!
It alters things if that be so;
For business is most truly 'jam'
When done with Hope of Amsterdam.
We will consider what you say,
Good Mr Grabyourshare, good-day."

Epaminondas Grabyourshare
With speed most wholly past compare
A rapid course began to cram,
And landed soon at Amsterdam,
Where to the father quick he sped
Of her whom he aspired to wed.

Good Mr Hope received him there
With somewhat of a boorish stare—
He did indeed but lightly mark
An under-sub-assistant clerk—
And half he gasped when this one cried,
"Your daughter, sir, must be my bride!"

'Twas not for long, for soon he rose,
And grasping by the nether clothes
This suitor of his dainty lamb,
He spoke in oaths of Amster—dam,
And in a moment, and no more,
Was kicking him from out the door.

"Ah," said Epaminondas, "ah!
Perhaps you'll pose as my papa,
Perhaps you'll change your angry mind,
And cease to kick me from behind,
On knowing me—my stars, I thank!—
Partner in Gwillian Beacon's Bank."

Illustrations to The Bank of Love

'Indeed!" the old man cried in joy,
"I'm glad to hear of it, my boy!
Your offer, I need hardly mention,
Will now receive my best attention."
. . . . .
Epaminondas Grabyourshare
Thus by diplomacy most rare,
And somewhat half akin to lies,
Attained a doubled-barrelled prize;
For soon a partner in the bank
He took the very highest rank,
And also to the altar led
The damsel he contrived to wed.
A cunning man indeed was he
And left a crafty progeny.

Rightly or wrongly, it was at that period accepted as common knowledge that Mr Labouchere's father or grandfather had brought off a marriage and a bank partnership in the manner indicated, and admirers of Phil May's genius cannot fail to note the family likeness of the young suitor to "Labby" himself. This, however, was only the *causa causans* of what was to follow.

This came with the remarkable correspondence published in *St Stephen's Review* of 24th October 1885. The paper used to go to press on Wednesday, though dated for Saturday. Here is what appeared in the first column of that issue:

At half-past seven this (Wednesday) evening I have received the following letter, to which my reply is subjoined. Comment is needless:—

To the EDITOR *of the* "ST STEPHEN'S REVIEW"

NORTHAMPTON, *21st October* 1885.

SIR,—I am deputed by Mr H. Labouchere to ask you to refer me to some friend who will act for you in giving Mr Labouchere the satisfaction due to him as a gentleman.

Mr Labouchere has for long thought it better to treat your scurrilous attacks on him with contempt, but some verses reflecting on his ancestors, which appeared in *St Steven's* [*sic*] *Review* a few weeks ago, and which have only just been brought to his notice, have convinced him that he owes it to himself and society to punish you as you deserve.

In making this proposal Mr Labouchere feels that he is doing an undue honour to a person so insignificant and obscure as yourself, and that he will perhaps be giving you an advertisement which your own merit would never procure for you. His course of action, however, has been decided on after full deliberation, and I will thank you, therefore, to put me in communication with your friend without delay. I have the honour to remain, sir, your obedient servant,

J. MANFIELD.

At MESSRS JUDD & CO.,
ST ANDREW'S HILL,
DOCTORS' COMMONS, E.C.
21st October 1885.

SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter, and beg to inform you that I most emphatically refuse to entertain the ridiculous proposal which it contains.

I have no desire to inflict grievous bodily harm on

Mr Labouchere, still less am I inclined to give him a chance—however remote—of inflicting it on me.

Who you, sir, may be I have not the slightest idea; and I cannot imagine why you, in preference to Mr Bradlaugh, should have been selected as the transmitter of this cartel; though considering the political past of Northampton, I can understand even the most egregious foolishness being aided and abetted in that constituency.

I am not conscious of having abused Mr Labouchere scurrilously or otherwise; indeed, I have always regarded him as a subject for mirth rather than indignation. The abuse, so far as it goes, has been all on his side, for since the institution of the Conservative News Agency, which I have the honour to conduct, he has not ceased to attempt to crush that undertaking by the most green-eyed monstrous paragraphs.

If I have read Mr Labouchere's past record aright, I can only say that I am astounded that he should desire to fight for his ancestors. The experience of others in regard to him would seem to indicate a disinclination on his part to fight even for himself; nor, from what I know, do Mr Labouchere's ancestors merit any such terrible self-sacrifice.

It would be out of place for me, looking at the relative ages of Mr Labouchere and myself, to suggest a method more in accord with modern civilisation by which he could receive satisfaction. If, however, the idea thus thrown out commends itself to him, I will willingly appoint my most aged retainer to meet him with horsewhips, the use of which weapons Mr Labouchere is understood to have learned by experience.

As for you, sir, if you will call at the office of *St*

Stephen's Review, you shall be dealt with as your appearance may render advisable. I have the honour to remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

W. ALLISON,
Editor St Stephen's Review.

J. MANFIELD, ESQ.

It will be observed that the letter from Northampton, purporting to have been written by Mr Labouchere's agent in that constituency, was received at 7.30 P.M. on Wednesday—and it was in fact received at that time, having been posted at Northampton with a view to the evening delivery. The answer to it was posted on the same evening, and the two letters having been set up in type for the next morning's issue of the paper, "pulls" of them were sent forthwith to the Press Association and other news agencies. The consequence was that the correspondence appeared in almost all the morning papers, and *The Pall Mall Gazette* came out with a special contents bill containing in immense type the legend—"Mr Labouchere, M.P., wishes to fight a duel!"

That and that only was the announcement on the bill.

One Radical paper complained bitterly of the folly of Mr Labouchere, who had "laid himself open to such a scathing retort!"

The affair was the sensation of a whole day before Mr Labouchere could repudiate his own responsibility in the matter, and, of course, many people did not believe him when he did so. Needless to say, *St Stephen's Review* obtained a splendid advertisement, and at this distance of time I am free to confess that I myself drafted the challenge as well as the answer

THE CHALLENGE

to it. The challenge was written out by the sub-editor, Tasker, who was in possession of a letter from Manfield, and he made a plausible imitation of the handwriting. He got a friend to post it at Northampton and it arrived just at the right time—too late to make inquiries, but not too late for an indignant reply.

Serious people may take exception to a practical joke of this character, but it was worth anything to make "Labby" the laughing-stock of the town, and that was what I really aimed at, not merely the advertisement.

Phil May produced his impression of the suggested encounter, and this is now reproduced; and the paper of the same date (31st October 1885) contained the following further details:—

CONCERNING THE DUEL

THE proposed duel between myself and Mr Labouchere was, as everyone knows now, a hoax, and it was, perhaps, transparent enough to have been detected in time had *St Stephen's* not been going to press when the letter signed J. Manfield arrived, and, in the hurry of the moment, it was easy to jump to a wrong conclusion.

The hoax was a three-cornered one, for it appears that there is a veritable Mr J. Manfield in the flesh, son of Mr. M. P. Manfield, though, somewhat unaccountably, Mr Labouchere, whose political agent Mr M. P. Manfield is, does not seem to be aware of Mr Manfield junior's existence.

I mention this because it has been stated that the letter was evidently intended to be from Mr M. P. Manfield, whereas I received, on the 23rd inst., a

letter from Mr J. Manfield in reply to the one I had written to his address. Below are given facsimiles[1] of the envelope and part of the contents of the original letter; and also of the envelope and letter sent by the genuine Mr J. Manfield. I leave it for the readers to judge whether or not the first letter is an attempt to copy Mr Manfield's handwriting. So far as Mr Labouchere is concerned, I addressed to him, on finding how matters stood, the following letter:—

23rd October 1885.

Dear Sir,—I notice from a statement sent round by the Press Association that the extraordinary letter received by me from Northampton on Wednesday night was not authorised by you.

In these circumstances I can only say that the letter lies here, open for your inspection, and I regret having replied to it in a manner which the facts have not warranted.

I may add that I have received an answer from Mr J. Manfield, who says he is the son of Mr M. P. Manfield, and denies all knowledge of the original letter; which letter, however, appears to have been written in imitation of his handwriting. I remain yours faithfully,

W. Allison.

H. Labouchere, Esq., M.P.

To this letter I received a courteous reply from Mr Labouchere, and there, so far as I am concerned, the thing ends, except that I should say that the alleged "reflections on Mr Labouchere's ancestors" which appeared in *St Stephen's* of 15th August 1885

[1] The facsimiles are omitted here.

were by no means of a serious character, and contained no particle of malice. Mr J. Manfield has now the original letter, and will possibly discover the writer, whom at present, however, I freely congratulate on his or her success.

I need only add here that Mr Labouchere never knew that I had not been victimised by some practical joker just as he was, and I never heard more from Mr Manfield, though I have reason to bless the pre-war boots made by the firm of which, I presume he was a member, and, I hope, still is.

CHAPTER II

A RUN WITH THE SINNINGTON

The Sinnington Hounds and Jack Parker—Lord Feversham and Lord Helmsley—The Weighted Hound—Away from Seamer Wood—Alone with Jack Parker—"Ne mair use than a lass i' frocks!"—Wrath of Lord Feversham—Exciting Run—Lord Helmsley *en avant*—"Stop him, somebody!"—Whoop!

I OUGHT, I think, to give precedence over my first chapter to a reminiscence of the early seventies, when Jack Parker and the Sinnington were famous in the land. Never did I enjoy such sport as with them, and in *Blair Athol* I described with accuracy not merely the pack and country, but also a never-to-be-forgotten run with the Sinnington, the characters being but very slightly disguised. Thus the Lord Feversham of that day was Lord Neversham, his son and heir, Lord Helmsley—one of the best from any point of view whatever—Lord Tillersley, and so on. Now I propose to take the account of that run—for it was a strictly true account—and give the characters in their real names.

The meet in question was at Nunnington, and around Nunnington there is, or used to be, a fair amount of good country, but when you got into the hills, unless you were to the manner born, you would be astonished and perplexed, half desirous to proceed in safety on foot.

These hills got wilder and more difficult for the ordinary horseman as you proceeded—here and there

JACK PARKER,

Huntsman of the Sinnington

Died November 14th, 1890, *aged* 68

Good bye, old friend, be mine the duty here
To touch thy memory, almost with a tear,
For time was once when, heedless of all care,
With Jack and hounds 'twas glorious to be there!
Ah, fleeting visions, dreams of other days,
Ere worldly struggles warped youth's simple ways,
Would that some brightness from the ever past
On darkening shadows might again be cast;
Would that again, to make the soul rejoice,
Sweet on the ear might ring Jack's cheery voice!
But no, it may not be, the Act is done,
The curtain falls, the due applause is won;
Yes, for 'mid all, who, be they high or low,
Battle their lives out in this world of woe,
None in his sphere more honest, true, and kind
Has left a record of his life behind,
None to our hearts, who knew and held him dear,
In sympathy of sport has come more near.
He did his duty well, with all his might;
Others might fail, but he was always right,
Tried well and trusted, so he played his part,
Nor needed prompting from his genial heart.
Good-bye, old friend, I cannot call thee back,
Nor in the whole world find thy fellow, Jack.

BLINKHOOLIE

well-nigh precipitous, over away past Helmsley; but the natives think nothing of it, mounted on their rough horses or active ponies, while you tremble for your neck or find that, having come out without a breast-plate, your saddle slips back on to the horse's tail as he is making his supreme effort to land you up some dangerous ascent. It was positively awful to see Jack Parker shove his horse along down these terrible places, with the most utter disregard of all chances of a fall; not even looking, to all appearance, where he was going, but bent solely on his business, with his eye on the irregular pack who were ascending with plentiful music the opposite side of the "gill."

But as to Jack Parker, he was the facsimile of the immortal "James Pigg," though he was not the original of the character. In the days to which I refer he had all his hounds "at walk" among the various farmers—a trencher-fed pack—and it used to be most interesting to see them dispersing this way and that to their respective homes when the day was over. A sufficient subscription was maintained to pay Jack and enable him to keep two horses—he never had more—and he had to make shift as best he could to obtain volunteer "whips" from among the young farmers.

At no time of the year was he idle. He would even engage himself in August to go off on the moors with the late Mr Digby Cayley and play the keeper. He was a clever man with dogs of all sorts and very entertaining to any party with whom he went out. At times his love of sport would break out in badger hunting.

Jack would occasionally deign to come down into Lord Middleton's or the York and Ainsty country and have a day on his own account, but he could never

divest himself of an air of conscious superiority to men so immaculately got up. Once when hounds were at fault near Raskelf, and the late Colonel Fairfax—one of the best of York and Ainsty Masters—was about trying a small larch plantation to the left of where Jack was stationed, he, Jack, pointing to a bit of cover on the right, opened his mouth and spoke:

"*Coom back, man! T' thing 'at you're leeakin' for's ge'an doon there!*"

This was said with great disdain, as if a York and Ainsty Master or fox were wholly unworthy of consideration.

To return to the day in question. Everything seemed favourable to sport, though a long delay was necessitated by Lord Feversham, who, though not even nominally the Master, was the principal subscriber to the hounds, and had to be treated with deference, no matter how exasperating his late hours made him to those who arrived in time.

There were some thirty mounted men at the meet, including those who bestrode ponies and donkeys, the majority being farmers with rough, unkempt young horses that might develop into something some day, while there were a few business-like old sportsmen who looked as though they meant to see the fun, though they might not be able to go any great pace.

Jack Parker helped the time to pass more lightly by his rough "quips and cranks," especially taking me and a friend for his butts, and prophesying how he would show "them York chaps a thing or two" before the day was over.

At last, about twelve o'clock, there was a relieved cry of "Here he comes!" and, sure enough, Lord

Feversham came gaily cantering up, attended by his hopeful heir-apparent, Lord Helmsley, with two men who might have been second horsemen but were really destined for much heavier work.

Everyone tried to look as if they had not been inwardly cursing his Lordship for more than an hour, and he, after a casual remark that he feared he was rather late, seemed to think no more about it.

A strange pack did the Sinnington appear in those days to anyone who scanned them as I did; very irregular were they, strange in colour, running most, however, to the light mealy shades such as you see little of in fashionable packs, though to my mind usually associated with sterling qualifications. Some there were throaty in the extreme and "dew-lapped like Thessalian bulls," others clean-cut and light-timbered. One—a York and Ainsty hound—ran mute, and had been drafted for that reason; but he ran to such purpose that he always far outstripped the rest and had been known to kill single-handed. There had been many doubts as to how to deal with this hound; but his nose was so undeniably good that he was of great service at times, and, in his case, Mr Jorrocks' advice was taken —"Be to his faults a little blind."

Someone at length happily suggested that he should be weighted so as to reduce his pace, and this was carried out at last with such nicety that he was adjusted by sundry bags of shot attached to his neck exactly to required speed. It then became necessary only to give him a voice, but no scheme was devised to perfect him in that particular.

Whatever the appearance of those hounds was, they certainly were most undeniable for their stoutness and

perseverance; while long habits of self-reliance, gained on the many occasions when they had to make out their own fox where no huntsman could get near them, had taught them to cast themselves in a manner that their more fashionable brethren might do well to imitate, instead of throwing up their heads and looking for assistance as soon as ever there is a difficulty.

But behold them now, just flashing into cover, and see them, as it were, twinkling among the trees, the busy sterns betokening the keen desire for sport. Old Jack's face beams as he watches and encourages them, with rather more than necessary clamour. Lord Feversham has come to a small rail that he must needs get over and is pouring forth curses to the empty air because the two men whom he has brought out *for this very purpose* are not there to pull it down for him.

They arrive in due course, having lagged behind on the supposition that someone will stand treat at the wayside hotel, and now as they canter up, wiping their mouths, they encounter a torrent of wordy wrath from his Lordship; but they seem used to it, and quietly pull the rail out with unperturbed countenances, while their dread Lord passes on.

A few moments later I myself came upon Lord Feversham behind a hedge, applying himself diligently to a large flask—a rather strange performance, seeing that the day had only just begun, and my face must have indicated surprise, for Lord Feversham remarked, by way of explanation: "Ah! when you get to my age you'll find it necessary to take some jumping powder before starting!"

I hardly knew what to reply, but I admired the frankness with which the explanation was given,

especially as I knew that Lord Feversham was a really good man across country in his earlier days. The result was I mumbled some meaningless commonplace, smiled as though it was a good joke, and passed on feeling rather ashamed of myself than otherwise.

This little incident had somewhat diverted my attention for a while, when suddenly a whimper from the cover—it was Seamer Wood—rapidly developing into a burst of music, recalled me to myself, and my good mare, Skittles, was all alert. She was one that I had from Bob Colling, the father of Bob Colling of Newmarket, and she was alleged to be a pure Cleveland bay, but I could never quite believe that she had not a cross of blood in her. Anyhow Bob Colling, the elder—a perfect horseman—had made her into a wonder at timber and cramped fences before she came into my possession.

An instant's glance showed me hounds bustling along, straight through the wood, directly away from me, while the rest of the field were scuttling round the wood to the left, Jack Parker alone having taken the right side, and thus being widely separated from them.

Hounds were hanging to the left, and it certainly appeared that Jack must be out of it for once in a way, but I decided in a moment to follow him and chance it. Jack was fairly rolling about in his saddle with chuckling and laughing, hounds all the time seeming to be clean away in an opposite direction. I made a hasty inquiry as to which way they should go.

"You coom wi' me," said Jack; "Ar'll put ye right; neän o' them other chaps'll get aboon half-a-mile." And thereat he chuckled and laughed as before, evidently

hugely delighted at the impending discomfiture of a field who had thought their line better than his.

There was nothing for it but blind confidence, so I followed along a bridle-path in a direction quite opposite to what seemed the right one, and suddenly we came to a railway, just where there was a level crossing.

"See that?" said Jack, pointing out the line, extending far into the distance, and taking the form of an embankment all the way, with high, stiff rails at the bottom on either side. "Them chaps'll have to loup yon railroäd, Ar reckon, or else coom back here."

Of course I now realised the position and pushed on after Jack over the crossing, never thinking, however, that we had not gone far out of our way, no matter how necessarily, and expecting we should have a long and fruitless ride of discovery in search of hounds.

Jack, however, set his horse going at best pace along the road, and I followed at a judicious interval, to keep clear of the stones which the great chestnut sent whizzing back.

We had not gone three-quarters of a mile in this way when Jack pulled up and to my amazement, admiration and delight beckoned me on with one hand, while he pointed forward with the other, and yelled in boisterous joy: "*Yonder they gan!*"

Yes, sure enough, they were even now about to cross the road three hundred yards in front of us, running at best pace and *all by themselves.*

It then became apparent how valuable was the knowledge of the country old Jack possessed, which enabled him to nick in with his hounds in this excellent manner. I was overjoyed at my own luck in having chosen the

better part, and avoided the line by which the rest had gone and become evidently pounded.

"Hoick forrard, forrard there!" roared Jack. "Coom on, lad, coom on; stick to me and Ar'll show ye what sport means!" and away he went, ramming his old horse across the ridge and furrow, having left the road by a friendly gate.

Hounds were racing along a field ahead at a pace which would have been good for any country, and though it could hardly be said a sheet would have covered them, still they were very well together, all things considered.

I settled myself down to follow my leader, judging this to be the best course, after the experience I had had of those who went their own way and suffered accordingly. Skittles was a sweet mare and a fast one too, so that there was no difficulty in keeping within easy distance of Jack; the only question was what wild feats might be necessary to perform on the route.

Even at that moment I saw him sit down and drive his horse at best pace at a lowish stake-and-bound fence in a way that showed he evidently apprehended mischief on the other side. The big chestnut made a mighty effort, and floundered about with his hind legs a good deal on landing, before getting away. Jack actually deigned to look round, and sang out cheerily to me: "*It's nowt*; send her at it!" Nor did he cease to watch till I and Skittles were safely over the obstacle, as big and ugly a looking "stell" as can be found in a day's march.

There was no time, however, to think of such matters. The pace was, if anything, improving, and hounds began to show a very considerable tail. Jack and I

pounded on after them, the country being rare going and the fences very negotiable.

"Forrard on there, ye slinking divils!" shouted Jack, cutting at the laggards of the pack, whom we had now caught up. "My eyes, sir, but this'll show you what's what."

I was thoroughly enjoying myself. To anyone who has only hunted among hundreds of his fellows the sensation of being "away" with but one companion is very novel, and I venture to think that the man who has ever experienced it will look back to that day as a red-letter one in his annals of sport.

But Jack's chestnut was not infallible, and he blundered over some stiff rails that came in the way, rolling over and over and crumpling up his rider in most formidable fashion. I pulled up in some apprehension.

"Gan on, lad—gan on wi' ye!" roared Jack, shaking himself free from his horse. "Never mind me; stick to 'em! *Ar's all reet.*" And so he was, though it would have taken many men weeks to get over such a fall.

Thus we slipped along for a good twenty minutes to a small larch plantation which extended over an opposing hill or bank. Here there was a not unacceptable check, as hounds went bustling among the undergrowth up the ascent, followed by Jack and me. I found vast difficulty in keeping my head clear of the tree branches; and this difficulty was enormously increased when, having reached the top, the "wild huntsman" urged his career in most break-neck fashion down the other side, where the trees grew very thick and the descent was very steep.

But despite hounds driving him hard and close our fox had had too much of the open to take to it again in a hurry, and it was soon manifest he was "back," by some cunning wile or other. Up the hill again perforce we went, Jack calling on me to put the hounds to him, and when I could but ill perform such an exploit, being almost wholly occupied in keeping clear of the trees, I heard the uncomplimentary remark muttered in front: "Rot him! He's ne mair use than a lass i' frocks!"

So there we clattered backwards and forwards in this bit of cover and wasted time and temper.

My own failure to rise to the occasion I have been careful to recall in Jack's own words, lest it should be thought that I have any vainglorious ideas about that run.

Jack's horse once more came to grief, and this time rolled on to him and lay there, while he, so far as being concerned about it, continued calling to his hounds, "Yut in there, Ravager!" etc., etc., as if nothing had happened. I managed to get the old horse pulled up, and Jack, after shaking himself, calmly remounted.

Just then many of the field, having at length found out the way, came up with much noise and clattering, inclined, of course, to underrate the whole performance. However, as if he had waited for them, the fox took upon himself to slip away again. A loud "Tally-ho!" from an enthusiastic yokel proclaimed his departure, and his now augmented pursuers settled themselves to the chase.

I saw a gate handy on to the road close by, which led in the direction hounds were making towards, and I hurried through it, closely followed by Lord Feversham and preceded by a trousered man on a white horse, who

made frantic endeavours to stimulate the somewhat obese animal to excessive speed.

Suddenly, while we were thus rattling along downhill, the white horse, for some mysterious reason, took upon itself to fall headlong to earth, hurling its unhappy rider violently upon the hard macadamised road. I slipped past them all right, but Lord Feversham, following close in the wake of the fallen, was nearly upset. We pulled up while the trousered one slowly arose, rubbing his knees, clasping his elbows, and evidently in much pain. I was about to inquire whether he was hurt, when Lord Feversham, who had been seriously alarmed by the danger that had threatened himself, broke out:

"D——n you, man! You did that on purpose! You did it on purpose to throw me down! *I* know your ways! Take your beastly horse away, and if ever you dare to throw him down before me again in that way I'll have you committed for trial—I will, so help me God!"

The poor man was too bewildered to say anything, and with a withering glance of rage Lord Feversham cantered on.

I, too, made the best of my way forward, on seeing that the man was not materially injured, not a little amazed at the idea of anyone being supposed capable of selecting such a very self-sacrificing way to injure his Lordship.

Hounds were making straight for Gilling Wood and scarcely getting way enough on to stop the bold Reynard before he reached that point of security. Still it was evidently going to be a near touch; and when at last they actually ran through the village, with all the inhabitants yelling out, "He's only just afore you; gan

THE PRIME MINISTER

on, Jack, and you'll sartainlie kill him!" the excitement became very intense.

"This way," cries the village butcher, leading them on through a fold-yard into a long pasture field some three-quarters of a mile from the wood. "Shove 'em on, Jack; he's dead beat. Yonder he is!" pointing to the fox dragging wearily along, just a field ahead.

Out comes Jack's horn, and hounds fly to him as he takes his horse short by the head and crams him forward at his best remaining speed down the long pasture. The rest follow; but lo! Jack pulls up short.

"What's the matter?" cry several voices.

"Dang me, if that aren't ower much of a good thing!" says he; and indeed it appeared so, for we were fronted by an absolutely impervious bullfinch, one solitary gap in which was fenced to the height of fully six feet by the most solid-looking rails.

"Oh, we'll never stop now!" cried Lord Helmsley, and without a moment's hesitation he rode his grey horse at the formidable rails.

"Stop him, stop him! he'll be killed!" yelled his agonised parent. "Will nobody stop him? D—n those men of mine! Where are they?"

But, of course, nobody interposed, and the youngster's horse cleared the rails without touching them.

I knew my mare to be a wonder at timber—thanks to Bob Colling—so I must needs have it too, and just landed after hitting it somewhat heavily behind. I looked back and saw Jack Parker dismounted and pulling down the top rail. This was enough. "Forward!" is the word, and as I entered the very last field before Gilling Wood, together with Lord Helmsley, hounds were just running into their fox, who died with the haven

of refuge before his eyes. The rest soon came up, and the day was now at an end.

. . . . . .

Time flies indeed, for the Lord Helmsley of whom I have just been writing was the grandfather of the present young Lord Feversham, and the then Lord Feversham was the great-grandfather.

Lord Helmsley, as I have already said, was one of the very best, and though his sisters were famous for their beauty, I think he was the best-looking of the whole family, and yet a thorough man.

He died all too soon, and his son, a cousin of the present Lord Londonderry, was Master of the Sinnington in the later years, but met a soldier's death in the war, leaving his young son to inherit the title.

The run with the Sinnington as above described is accurate in every detail, and though the old Lord Feversham was a little excited when he came upon himself thus delineated in *Blair Athol*, it was all taken in good humour — for it was strictly true — and the reproduction of it now will do him no harm, for he was a good sportsman in his day, and was only trying to carry on then against the inroads of time—as he in fact told me.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED REVOLUTION

Old-time Suggestions of Bolshevism—*St Stephen's Review* and Phil May—Lord Salisbury to be burned in Trafalgar Square—The Duke of Westminster destitute—Punished because they paid—Other Dukes in Trouble—The Popular Poll—Frank Slavin as Serjeant-at-Arms

I AM tempted now to pass through another stage of *St Stephen's Review*, if only to show some more Phil May sketches, and also to indicate rather closely the apprehensions felt in 1889 of the Bolshevist proclivities which have developed in these later days, though ineffectually—thank goodness!—in our own country. Prophets have always been notoriously bad judges of time intervals, and in producing the *St Stephen's Review* Christmas number of 1889, entitled "Crime," and purporting to describe the coming Revolution, I anticipated the occurrence of the disaster too early. But as told and illustrated in that Christmas number, it is very much what we now know has happened in Russia. All people of any importance were represented as having been incarcerated. A Phil May sketch represents Lord Salisbury being burned at the stake in Trafalgar Square, and the big cartoon included all the eminent men of the day doing prison exercise under the supervision of warders, and, of course, in prison garb.

Charles Wood, who was then under a cloud, which has for many years been lifted, I am glad to say, was cast for the Bow Street Magistrate, under the supposed

revolutionary regime, and here are some of the incidents which were recorded in that number:

A DESTITUTE DUKE

A POORLY clad man, who on inquiry was found to be the Duke of Westminster, appeared at Bow Street this morning and asked the advice of the presiding magistrate, Mr Charles Wood. He stated that he was absolutely destitute, and that he was persecuted by the Income Tax Commissioners, who held judgments against him for enormous sums.

MR WOOD.—I don't see how I can help you. How can you be destitute if your Income Tax is enormous?

The Duke explained that of late years he had received no rent whatever from any of his tenants, but that he had been taxed on the nominal amount of his rent-roll all the same, and that, too, on an immensely increased scale, in accordance with the recommendations of Mr Hyndman's Committee on Graduated Income Tax.

MR WOOD.—In point of fact, you have to pay Income Tax though you have no income? (*Laughter.*)

The Duke replied that that was so. He had written to Mr W. H. Melvil, solicitor to the Inland Revenue Department, also to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Howells, but he could obtain no redress.

All his horses had long since been seized and sold, and owing to the accident of his birth he had not been educated to any trade and was now too old to learn.

MR WOOD.—Why don't you turn bookmaker?

The Duke pointed out that he had no money, and therefore would be unable to pay if he lost; but Mr Wood explained that the provisions of the Welshers'

THE REIGN OF TERROR

Burning Lord Salisbury

Relief Act would amply protect him in such an emergency, and to meet his present needs ordered him to receive £1 from the poor box. The Duke thanked the learned magistrate and withdrew; but it is stated that he was arrested immediately on leaving the court, at the suit of the Income Tax Commissioners, and we understand that he is now confined in Holloway Gaol.

PUNISHED BECAUSE THEY PAID

Persons giving the names of Steel, Peech, Percival, Ulph, Masterman and Hammond were charged before Sir Chippy Bull this morning at Marlborough Street with offending against the Welshers' Relief Act by paying the amount of betting debts incurred by them.

Police Constable Joskins deposed to apprehending the prisoners at Tattersalls when in the very act of "settling"; and on apprehending and searching them he found that they were possessed of ample means to defray their liabilities. (*Groans in court, immediately suppressed.*) He cautioned the prisoners, and they said it was "all right." The prisoner Masterman invited him to come and lunch at Romano's before proceeding further, but he declined to do so.

Sir Chippy Bull.—Is there any defence?

Mr Hammond, on behalf of himself and the other defendants, stated that they did not know that they were doing wrong in paying what they owed.

Sir Chippy Bull.—You may have heard, sir, that ignorance of the law is no excuse; and as the recent Act enjoins that bookmakers, while acknowledging their liabilities, shall never pay, if by so doing they do more than every other bookmaker can, you will understand

that by your action you have deeply offended the Welsher Socialists, in whose interest the Act in question was passed. You have done what the Union of Federated Welshers cannot do—you have paid; and you must suffer accordingly. I sentence you severally to a fine of £500, or three months' imprisonment.

The fines were immediately paid, and the prisoners left the court with their friends.

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND LANGUISHING AT HOLLOWAY

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRISONER

HE IS MADE TO EAT HORSE-FLESH

ARMED with a pass to see the Duke of Portland at Holloway, a *St Stephen's Review* man presented himself early yesterday morning at those gloomy but not unfamiliar portals. It is needless to recapitulate the obstacles and petty insolences to which he was subjected before arriving where the prisoner was on view—at the other side of two gratings, with a warder between. It was said that only five minutes' conversation would be allowed and so no time was to be lost.

REPORTER.—Why are you here?

DUKE OF PORTLAND.—I hardly know. I believe it is because I won so much money with Donovan years ago; and according to Socialist doctrines it ought to have belonged to the stable-boy who looked after the horse, and anyone else who did any work in regard to him.

REPORTER.—I see. You did no work, and therefore earned nothing, so far as Donovan was concerned?

DUKE OF PORTLAND.—That is what they say; but it

THE BAR OF THE HOUSE

(As anticipated)

seems hard, considering that I should have had to pay if he had not turned out a winner.

REPORTER.—Are you comfortable here?

DUKE OF PORTLAND.—By no means. They contend that as I have deprived stable-boys of their just dues I must live like a stable-boy, and (*this in a whisper*) I believe they give me horse-flesh to eat. It comes rather hard on one to make such a complete change; and then I understand that since my imprisonment poor St Simon has been shot by the mob of federated horse-owners because his success at the Stud was so great that he infringed their rules. This has been a bitter blow to me.

Here the Duke was visibly moved. He was about to say more when the warder roughly intimated that "time was up," and the *St Stephen's Review* man had to depart on his way with these brief but interesting details.

The Duke of Beaufort was in solitary confinement and on punishment diet so could not be seen.

We can only add that we trust there is still some spark of courage and generosity in the British race which will glow to fever heat over this unmerited and dastardly punishment inflicted on the amiable Duke, and we cannot but think that a people once supposed to be devotees of Sport will rise in their wrath at such an outrage on one of their idols and hurl our detested rulers from the place which they so evilly occupy.

The sketch of Frank Slavin as the Serjeant-at-Arms, after the Popular Poll, is very perfect. I should like to have seen Frank in those days up against such as Dempsey and Carpentier. Peter Jackson, alone, was too good for him, but Peter was the wonder of the world.

The Bar of the House under the Popular—or shall we say Revolutionary—Poll, with Arthur Roberts as Speaker and Romano taking a conspicuous part, was surely an intelligent anticipation of events such as may occur when the country is off its head.

CHAPTER IV

WITH PHIL MAY AT NEWMARKET

The Rutland Arms—Mathew Dawson and Morning Work—Derby and Oaks Candidates of 1891—Thoughts and Fancies—Facts from the Past—Old and Young Tom Jennings—Mimi, Dorcas and Corstorphine—The Deemster and Gouverneur—Captain Machell—Concerning Touts—Mathew Dawson and Phil May

DURING the interval between the demise of *St Stephen's Review* and my connection with *The Sportsman*—that is to say, the first three quarters of 1891—I was trying to bring out a new Tory paper, *Big Ben*, and incidentally doing work with Phil May. His name is little remembered as touching the sport of racing, and therefore it seems only right to give here, with the kind permission of *The Daily Graphic*, a series of illustrated articles which Phil May and I did at Newmarket for that paper more than thirty years ago, just before Common's Derby. We stayed for one week at the Rutland Arms as the guests of the then manager, Mr Stebbings, and this is how the thing panned out, in what was really a remarkable year—at any rate so far as the three-year-old fillies in Mathew Dawson's stable were concerned:

"*Daily Graphic*," *Monday, 25th May* 1891.

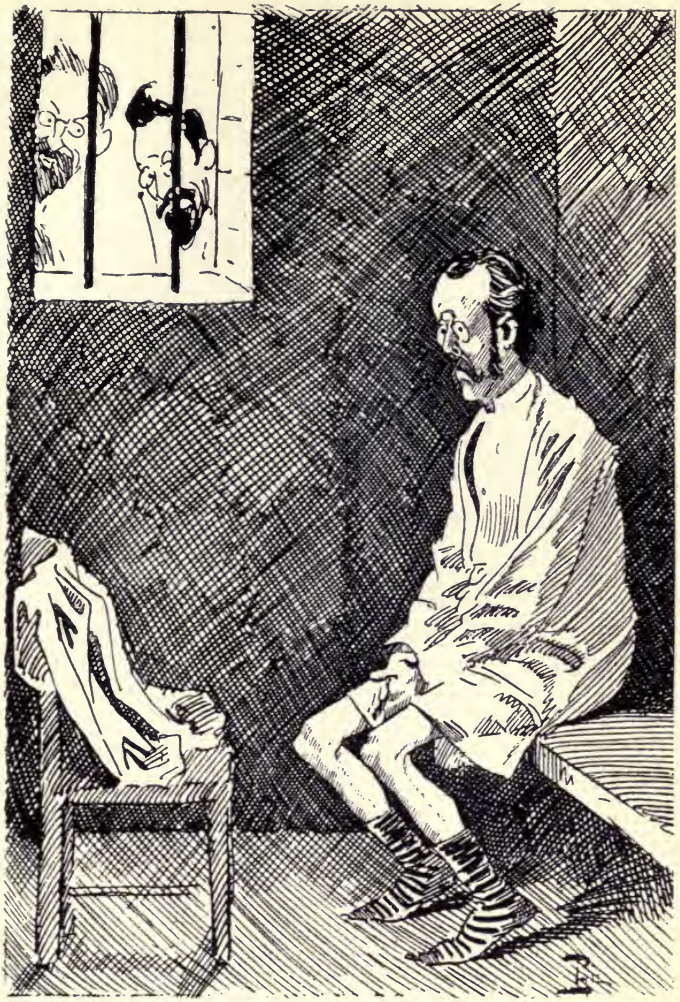
PREPARING FOR THE DERBY (I.)

NOTES ON NEWMARKET HEATH

By "BLINKHOOLIE"

THERE is no more interesting week at Newmarket throughout the whole year than that which immediately

precedes the Derby. It is then that the favourites have to be fairly wound up for the great struggle, and every morning on the Heath one may see gallops done which are really worth looking at, while every afternoon and evening one is sure to be told of some great trial, or of the breakdown of a fancied candidate. Nowhere is to be found such a variety of opinions as at Newmarket, and the man who goes there with a view to finding out what to back will presently find himself in a rare state of confusion. Let him endeavour, for instance, to elicit wisdom from those who may happen to be congregated in the bar parlour of the Rutland Arms. One worthy will assure him that Gouverneur will be about the mark, while another will scornfully allude to the fact that Gouverneur only beat Reverend on sufferance the other day. "Mr Dawson fancies Dorcas," says another; to which comes the rejoinder that Dorcas, on public form, "isn't within a stone of a good one." The Deemster is mentioned with bated breath; some say he is sure to win, others declare him to be only moderate, while others, again, hint at mysterious ailments with which he is said to be afflicted. Then it is suggested that Colonel North will win the Derby just because he is Colonel North; but against that it is said Simonian was beaten in his trial on Wednesday. I venture, however, to remark that Sherwood's horses always are beaten in their trials, and that I pay small attention to the circumstances. One thing — and one thing only — appears certain, that the Derby, this year, is a very open race, and that there is no sort of reason why Common should stand at so short a price as he does.



W. O'Brien avenged

MATHEW DAWSON

However, one can at least find true pleasure at Newmarket by being up betimes and going to see the horses gallop, whether it results in one finding out the winner or not. On Friday I had the great pleasure and advantage of being in company with Mathew Dawson on the race-course side, and as I was presently joined by Tom Jennings, sen., and Marsh I could not well have been better placed. Mathew Dawson has had over fifty years' experience as a trainer, and has been for a long time the acknowledged head of the craft. When the late Lord Falmouth broke up his stud seven years ago, Mr Dawson at first intended to retire, and his nephew, George, was advanced to a position of responsibility, which he has since continued to occupy to the great satisfaction of his employer, the Duke of Portland. Mr Dawson, however, was far too fresh and hale and hearty to be contented with retirement, so he soon was at work again, and though it took some years before he got such good horses under his charge as before, there can be no question that he has managed to do so this season. Indeed it may be questioned whether any man ever trained at the same time five such excellent three-year-old fillies as Mimi, Melody, Mons Meg, Dorcas and Corstorphine. It is by no means certain that any one of the five could not win the Derby, but Dorcas happens to be the only one entered, and consequently our attention centred on her for a moment.

DORCAS

Dorcas is a very good-looking chestnut filly, with a big black birth spot on her quarters, which tells of her

descent from Bend Or. She has rare limbs, is as sound as a bell, and stays. That much we can say for her; and now she has gone down under the care of Arthur Briggs to do a "sweating pace" gallop with Mons Meg and Melody. These three belong to Mr Dan Cooper, the well-known Australian sportsman, and he is so popular that his victory on Wednesday at Epsom would be hailed with enthusiasm. And as I wait on the hill, some distance away across the heath, I am entertained by Mr Jennings and Mr Dawson with reminiscences of great horses they have trained, from Thormanby and Gladiateur down to St Simon, Minting and Sheen. Jennings has a very kindly recollection of Chamant, who, no doubt, was a flyer till he went wrong after the Two Thousand; but Mathew Dawson reminds him of what a horse Verneuil was that year when he carried all before him at Ascot. Indeed, Mathew Dawson has good cause to remember Verneuil, for he trained both Silvio and Hampton, whom the big chestnut galloped fairly to a standstill in the Ascot Cup.

THE GALLOPS

As we keep on gossiping horse after horse passes us at various rates of speed; some merely cantering, others bustling along in view of early engagements, and many—far too many—proclaiming with no uncertain note the wind infirmity which is such a curse to our blood stock. Anything of account is pointed out to me, and among these was Peter Flower, who struck me as tackling the hill neither resolutely nor like a stayer, and I shall be much surprised if he gets near the front in the Derby. But now come the three that I am specially looking for—Melody, Mons Meg and Dorcas—and I

cannot but notice the peculiar action of Mons Meg as they approach. It is impossible to describe, except that she gives the idea that her legs are going round like wheels. Be that as it may, she can unmistakably gallop, and is by far the best "Waler" ever imported into this country; a magnificent mare, too, in appearance. Dorcas, on the far side, strides out with great freedom and superabundance of vigour, and receives high praise from Mr Jennings. Both he and her veteran trainer agree that of the three mares, taking them as we have just seen them, they would choose Dorcas, and Mr Jennings further opines that she will run infinitely better with a man on her back. Mimi and Corstorphine both galloped past us in rare form, and which of them will win the Oaks, or whether Dorcas will land a double event, time only can determine. Suffice it that they are all very fit and well, and that no more genuine candidate than Dorcas will be stripped for the Derby.

AN EVENING AT MATHEW DAWSON'S

After a close inspection of Dorcas and her stable companions at home, where Arthur Briggs so carefully controls the establishment on behalf of his uncle, I spent an evening at Exning with Mr Dawson himself. Amid trophies of the past, such as hoofs of Thormanby and Thunder, tails of Chanticleer, Thormanby and Julius, a piece of the skin of Eclipse, Boehm's original model of St Simon, and portraits of Dutch Oven, Wheel of Fortune, Silvio, Melton, Minting, Lambkin, etc., etc., we naturally had any amount of subjects for conversation. I was glad to find my host in such excellent form, cheery as ever he was in his life, and, to

all appearance, not a day older than when I spent a similar evening with him in Silvio's year.

We are on the Heath betimes next morning. And what a beautiful morning this Saturday was, and how many rumours were flying about! With one consent trainers seemed to have taken to the race-course side, and it was bruited about that various important gallops were to take place. The Deemster, among others, was to be put through the mill—Mr J. B. Leigh and Lady Rose Leigh had come down specially to see the spin —so everyone was on the alert, and there, sure enough, on driving down to the stand, were Jewitt's lot walking about, and The Deemster himself, easily to be recognised from his strange old-fashioned head and general wear-and-tear appearance. He certainly looked in perfect health, with a rare bloom on his quarters, and we are not a little anxious to see how he acquits himself.

DORCAS'S FORM

Before The Deemster gallops, however, we have the opportunity of once more seeing Dorcas do her work, and she certainly does it in magnificent form, covering an immense amount of ground in her stride, and going with the greatest resolution. I believe that I am not betraying any confidence when I state that she has twice been tried to be about a length better than Melody, and that she stays well. Corstorphine and Mimi[1] are both thoroughly fit for the Oaks, and even their trainer would be puzzled which to back for that race, the only point of note being that Corstorphine is more suited for a course like the Leger than the hills and turns of Epsom.

But now, sure enough, Mr Leigh and Lady Rose

[1] Mimi won the Oaks with Corstorphine second.

JEWITT AND MR. "BUNNY" LEIGH

appear on the scene with Jewitt, and The Deemster has gone down with another to the start. All is expectation, not merely on the part of the various touts who are present in full force, but sundry trainers, such as Mathew Dawson, Tom Jennings, sen., etc., look on with some anxiety. After all, there is no great reason for such excitement. The Deemster simply does a good striding gallop, nothing in the nature of a trial at all. We can see that he moves well, albeit somewhat sluggishly—for which we like him none the worse—but beyond that we are no wiser after his gallop than before; nor, as we imagine, is anyone else. Captain Machell is not yet back in Newmarket, and The Deemster remains a mystery to the inhabitants of the place.

GOUVERNEUR

Next, young Tom Jennings becomes very much *en évidence*, and we find that Gouverneur is to gallop, which he does to some purpose. With two stable companions he comes along at a rattling pace, the chestnut on the far side being done with after little more than half the distance is accomplished, and as Gouverneur and the other pass us it is evident that the Derby horse has all the best of it, and could gallop clean away from his companion if asked to do so. The trainer is evidently a good deal excited by what he sees in this gallop, and bustles his hack along after them to the finish, so as to miss nothing that is to be seen. Were we not assured that Gouverneur did his work before the Two Thousand just as well as he is doing now, I should be very much tempted to support him for the Derby, but it is to be feared that he will not show his form in public. I certainly do not think, after what I have seen, that he

lacks stamina. And now, after a few words with George Dawson, who has no Donovan, Ayrshire or Memoir among three-year-olds to triumph with this year, we leave the Heath for this morning, with a balance of opinion in favour of Dorcas, whose owner, by the way, Mr Daniel Cooper, arrived by the 11.20 train on a flying visit to see how his mare is going on. By Wednesday let us hope that the actual winner will have been revealed to us.

"*Daily Graphic*," *Tuesday*, 26*th May* 1891.

PREPARING FOR THE DERBY (II.)

NOTES ON NEWMARKET HEATH

By "BLINKHOOLIE"

LITTLE now remains to be done in regard to the Derby favourites. The winding-up operation is practically at an end, and by to-morrow afternoon the labours and hopes of the past month will have culminated one way or another. Newmarket is beginning to look dreary, as one by one the best-known faces go off by the Epsom specials, and one cannot but wonder what it will be like here on the Derby Day. But still the busy discussion goes on among the wiseacres who delight in airing some show of second-hand knowledge. One gentleman calmly assures us that Corstorphine will most certainly beat Mimi in the Oaks; he is aware that the stable will back Corstorphine, but all the boys in the stable consider Mimi the better. Another tells us that it has long since been settled that George Chaloner shall ride Dorcas in the Derby—this despite the fact that Mr Dawson himself did not know it on Sunday morning. A third declares that when FitzSimon, Old Boots, Simonian and St Simon of the Rock were galloped the other day, the

last two only were being tried; and we are further informed that Gouverneur tired dreadfully at the finish of his gallop on Saturday, though we saw him with our own eyes clean settle two of his stable companions, Prétendant II. and Royal Robe II., and go on to the bitter end as full of running as a horse could be. What nonsense all these men talk, to be sure! We may not find the actual winner ourselves, but let us hope to avoid falling into drivelling folly of the kind alluded to.

A CHAT WITH OLD TOM JENNINGS

Mr Jennings, sen., at any rate is worth listening to, and he can talk to some purpose when he gets fairly under way. He has no Derby horse himself this year, and can therefore speak without prejudice—except, indeed, that Gouverneur is trained by his son. Mr Jennings is very far from being one of the foolish persons who will tell you for certain what will win, but he seems to be very fond of Dorcas, and expresses the opinion that she would run much better with a man on her back, such as John Osborne. Mr Jennings tells us of Gladiateur and of his extraordinary trial when he beat the four-year-old Fille de l'Air at eight pounds like a common hack. Certainly Gladiateur was a wonder, and it was never more clearly shown than in the Ascot Cup, when he was very infirm, and his jockey durst not ask him to gallop till turning up the hill for the finish. Then, it will be remembered, he made up his ground like a flash of lightning and soon left Breadalbane and Regalia struggling in the rear. It was commonly thought that Gladiateur was a dead failure at stud, but he sired one horse at least—Hero, to wit—as good as himself. We pass on from talk about past Derbys to

the present once more, and young Tom comes in, not a little confident about Gouverneur. It is not generally known that ten days before the Two Thousand this colt had no fewer than five teeth taken out, and one can well believe that were he the best in the world he would not have shown his true form in such circumstances. Perhaps the best thing to do is to spend an hour on Sunday morning on the Long Hill and again see Gouverneur and the others gallop.

UP THE LONG HILL

Here we are once more in company with Mr Dawson. Others with us are Arthur Briggs, Rickaby (who will ride Peter Flower to-morrow), George Dawson (who for the time being is thinking more of farming operations than Derby favourites), and here comes Watts on his grey hack, ready to ride The Deemster in his morning spin. "Watch that mare Dorcas this morning," says Mr Dawson, "George Chaloner will be riding her"—and, as he speaks, we see Melody striding along up the hill, with Dorcas in close attendance. Certainly Dorcas reaches out and lays herself down to her work in grand style, and as we note the black spot on her quarter as she flashes past us we wonder how many of the field to-morrow will be close enough to her at the finish to see that spot. Mons Meg next goes by, followed by Corstorphine, who is a lazy mover, not very taking in her action, but she must be judged by her deeds, and these we know to have been great. Mimi does her gallop alone, and very well indeed does she look, though she goes higher in front than you usually see in the case of a really good one. It is easy to notice that Mr Dawson rather inclines to her than to Corstorphine as

CAPT. MACHELL

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL JOHN PORTER SIR JOHN ASTLEY

LORD ALINGTON MR. JAMES LOWTHER

A GROUP OF WELL-KNOWN SPORTSMEN

an Oaks mare, though there cannot be much in it; and now that Haute Saone seems to have hopelessly lost form, what is to prevent Corstorphine, Mimi and Dorcas from being the first three in the Oaks?

Captain Machell, who returned overnight, and Jewitt have now arrived on the scene, and Watts has gone down to have his ride on The Deemster. Very soon you may see the good old Roman nose of the big brown coming up the hill at a nice pace. Veau d'Or is leading him, and as they pass us The Deemster is moving very well indeed, insomuch that he elicits an expression of approval from Mathew Dawson—"That fellow can go, whatever people may say." Personally we should be very glad indeed to see The Deemster successful, as Mr J. B. Leigh is one of the most popular men on the Turf, and well deserves the highest success. He has a nice bet of £8000 to £100 about the horse, taken in the spring of last year. Gouverneur has a nice six furlongs' canter—quite enough after his rousing gallop of the previous day, and then the morning's work is to all intents and purposes at an end. Mr Dawson goes home to church—so do most of the others, for Newmarket is quite a church-going community—and we once again endeavour to work out the Wednesday's problem, still hankering after Dorcas.

WARREN TOWER AND PHANTOM HOUSE

Those who are privileged to visit Mr Dan Cooper's new house, called Warren Tower, which is situated at the top of the Warren Hill, will find it a charming place. The gardens alone are worth a visit, but, for the lover of horses, the pictures will afford an especial treat. There is a really splendid collection of Herring's

works, including the portraits of such celebrities as Sir Tatton Sykes, Beeswing, Alice Hawthorn, Our Nell, Magistrate, Attila, Charles XII., Touchstone, Plenipotentiary Don John, Mundig, Orlando, Charles XII. and Euclid running their dead-heat. In addition to all these by Herring are many by Harry Hall, such as Prince Charlie, the brood mares Eastern Princess (with Prince Charlie at foot) and Tomyris; Kingston, Isonomy, Stockwell, Adventurer, Caller Ou and others, while of rare old sporting prints there is practically an unlimited number. Everyone is sorry that the illness of Mr Cooper's little daughter should have been such a source of trouble to him just now, but latest reports are more favourable, and one can hope that the little one was pleased with the beautiful flowers and strawberries which were sent up to town for her from the hot-houses of Warren Tower last Saturday.

Phantom House, the abode of young Tom Jennings, has also its works of art, some of them very notable ones —such, for instance, as a splendid collection of artist's proofs of Meissonier's best pictures—and you will find young Tom a most courteous and entertaining host, happy to show you his horses, or in any other way to meet your views. Looking over Gouverneur in his box on Sunday, one could not but feel that he is good-looking enough to win anything, and he certainly shows no trace of the temper with which certain of the sporting writers credit him. Standing about 16·1, on excellent limbs, with great length, reach and quality, Gouverneur looks all over a first-class horse, and though he wears cloth bandages tightly sewn on his fore legs, these are only precautionary supports. The defeat of his stable companion Reverend in the French Derby the same

afternoon is not, of course, reassuring to those who have backed Gouverneur, still one cannot get over the fact that he is a very grand horse, that he galloped like a stayer on Saturday, and, on his best form, is the best of his year. We looked over the rest of the Phantom House lot, some of the Energy two-year-olds being very promising; and we also saw Mamia, who has furnished into a grand brood mare. She has a filly foal by Tristan, which should be worth a lot of money.

MONDAY'S WORK

On Monday it rains, and people are leaving by the ten o'clock special. Mathew Dawson, among others, departs, being summoned to give evidence in the case in which Lord Rosslyn was defrauded. Nothing much is toward on the race-course side, but sapient touts are telling one another that The Deemster has split a pastern; that Mr Barrow has been sent for, and the horse with difficulty removed from the Heath. Of course there is not a word of truth in all this, for The Deemster, ridden by Watts, has, in fact, done a rousing gallop with Belmont and Rathbeal on the other side of the town, and is, to all outward appearance, as well as possible. We spend a profitable quarter of an hour, despite the rain, in company with George Dawson, and see St Serf gallop. This four-year-old is just about coming to his best, and should do great things at Ascot, Goodwood and other important meetings. The last tip we receive is in favour of Old Boots, who no doubt ran an extraordinary horse at Manchester; but we deem it impossible that any horse with such a name can win the Derby.

"*Daily Graphic*," *Wednesday, 27th May* 1891.

THE EVE OF THE DERBY (III.)

NOTES ON NEWMARKET HEATH

By "BLINKHOOLIE"

THE last moment has now come for deciding what, if anything, to do in the way of speculation on the Derby. Newmarket is desolate, all the Epsom candidates having departed for the scene of action, and the peculiar persons who style themselves "Newmarket correspondents," but whom others call "touts," have nothing much to do but argue with one another over "Scotch cold" or other seductive beverages, till they settle to their own satisfaction what will win. It is a curious thing, but the touts are almost invariably wrong. It is not, as some suppose, that they do not take the trouble to watch the horses at all. No, they work hard at their vocation; but they never manage to overcome their ignorance of horse-flesh. Therefore, except for the simple purpose of letting you know whether a horse is in work or not, the tout is useless, or worse; and at times he will even write of animals doing striding gallops when they have long ago been turned out of training. The tout is, indeed, a valuable friend to trainers and owners who have a good thing and want to back it, for the special information given by the astute watcher to the public is practically certain to be of a misleading character. Therefore the days when touts were consigned to horse ponds or otherwise maltreated are now no more; touts are, in fact, quite popular and welcome on Newmarket Heath, as on other training grounds, for it is well known that they are harmless, though the public considers them necessary. Some of them are,

THE MEN WHO THOUGHT THE DEEMSTER HAD BROKEN DOWN

indeed, great men; Mr Rodrigo, for instance, is on the School Board at Newmarket and the Local Board also, besides being a great Radical politician.

CAPTAIN MACHELL

No man, in the opinion of the touts, is more dark, deep and mysterious in his designs than Captain Machell. The idea that he ever contemplates the winning of a race except by divers tortuous devices never occurs to them. Even in the days of Hermit they would tell you that horse's broken blood-vessel and week's absence from the training ground was only part of the Captain's scheme for getting the money on; and as for his trials of his horses, they are invariably arranged with a view to deceive the public. Thus, although the Captain says frankly that The Deemster has never been beaten in a trial, and, but for a certain obvious cause, would never have been beaten in a race, the touts will have none of him. Nay, when the Captain goes on to allege that, in his opinion, The Deemster will win the Derby, it is regarded as certain that the horse can have no possible chance. The absurdity of all this is shown by the fact—which all who really know Captain Machell are well aware of—that whatever information he gives you or anyone else is always, and has always been, correct—so far as human foresight can go. Like Bismarck in diplomacy, he has found that to tell the truth is the wisest policy; you can thus benefit your friends, while, as your enemies will not believe you, they obtain no advantage. We who have seen The Deemster finish his preparation, and have also long since found out the wisdom of believing in Captain Machell, are strongly inclined to the view that

Mr J. B. Leigh's colt will win, nor should we be in the least surprised to find the much vaunted Common very far from being the good horse some people imagine.

OLD BOOTS

We stated yesterday that Old Boots is the latest Newmarket tip, and it is alleged that he will take a very great deal of beating indeed if the ground is holding. It would seem sacrilege for a horse with such a name to win the Derby; and one cannot imagine why he was sent to Manchester if he really is a Derby horse, still less why his chance was risked by entrusting him to a boy who knew he could not hold him, and who had positively nothing on to protect him from the cold but breeches, boots, jacket and a cap. Those who saw his exhausted condition after the race wondered how he ever managed to sit on Old Boots at all. We mention this because the horse, after numerous vagaries, did undoubtedly run very well, and, in the hands of Mornington Cannon, might carry on Colonel North's run of luck, even in the Derby. But it is all against him that he is the elect outsider of Newmarket, and for our own part we think his stable companions, FitzSimon and Simonian, will have to be reckoned with. The last-mentioned colt stays well, although the touts will tell you otherwise, and as Colonel North gave 4000 guineas for him when a yearling, he ought, on the principle of "money making the mare—or horse—to go," to be "thereabouts" in the Derby.

MATHEW DAWSON SATISFIED

It is stated that Dorcas did not give satisfaction in her gallop of last Saturday with Pelf. We can only

say that this information is absolutely erroneous and that Mr Dawson himself was well pleased with the way in which the mare did her work; indeed, he thinks she has a really good chance, and his opinion is surely more worth attention than that of the vague person or persons who were not satisfied. Anyhow, the net result of our observations is that we believe The Deemster will win the Derby and that Dorcas and Gouverneur will be second and third. It is certain, at any rate, that all are genuine candidates, and those who back them will have a good run for their money.

THE JUNIOR JOCKEY CLUB

The above title would more aptly describe "The Stablemen's Institute" at Newmarket, for certainly it is an excellent club of its kind, and just now, with so much depending on the result of the Derby, it is well to give just a thought to the boys to whom the welfare of the 1500 trained at Newmarket is in a great measure entrusted. Mr T. J. Moakson is the leading spirit of the Institute, and he may well be proud of the fact that there are now 450 members.

THE TOUTS AND THE DEEMSTER

In punishment of the persons who on Monday morning dared to express the opinion that The Deemster had split a pastern and been removed from the Heath under supervision of Mr Barrow, we cannot but include a sketch of them as they appeared in the full exuberance of their folly. Strangely foolish they are, as, of course, everyone knows, but few people will imagine their extreme idiocy as they appeared when they declared for

our edification that The Deemster had split a pastern. Well, after all, a "split" is an excellent thing.

In reference to the above articles, it is on record that Gouverneur ran second to Common for the Derby, but something went wrong with The Deemster in that race and he never started again. Dorcas started second favourite but ran jadily and never showed her home form in public, except in one race later on when she was a four-year-old and had that morning been mated with Sheen. Then she won her race quite easily. Mimi and Corstorphine, in the Oaks, completely vindicated Mathew Dawson's judgment, and Mons Meg, whom George Blackwell, who used to do her and ride her at exercise, declares to have been the best of them all, won the Gold Vase at Ascot running away, and would probably have won Ragimunde's Cesarewitch had not her owner insisted on her being tried over the full course the Saturday before the race.

At the Rutland Arms in those days the present head-waiter (Corser) and the well-known "Boots" were already installed, and I remember that Corser alarmed Phil May as to the possible vagaries of his hack, called Tomkins, when we rode out on the Sunday morning.

I never saw Mathew Dawson show any self-consciousness or lack of nerve, except when I was sitting with him that night at Exning and Phil May, who was also there, was just studying him.

We paid a similar visitation to Marsh, then at Lordship, and we were also shown all over the Jockey Club rooms, including the royal bedroom, but, of course, that was not for publication. The hoof of Eclipse is one of the trophies in those rooms.

I have dug up these ancient articles just to show Phil May in a new light. The tout last shown is still alive, and the sketch of him was taken while we were breakfasting at the Rutland. Phil May ran out into the street to make a note of him standing in front of Tindall's shop. The sketch which followed the Derby is extraordinarily good, but is of a different character, being an imaginary group of well-known characters.

CHAPTER V

CHILDWICK AND COMMON

First Impression of Childwick—His Sale as a Yearling—"Pavo" and Chattanooga — Common at Kingsclere — His Leger Victory—Robert Peck's Opinion—Mr (Sir) Blundell Maple's Greatest Triumph—Lord Marcus "never got a bid"

EQUINE celebrities of thirty years ago are to some extent more interesting than those of more recent date, and as I can quote what I myself wrote of some of them at the time, I have thought it well to do so, with what I hope is discreet moderation. For instance, on 2nd September 1891 appeared my first description (for *The Sportsman*) of the Sledmere yearlings. Here is an extract:

"I had the advantage of seeing Sir Tatton's yearlings out of their boxes as well as in, and after a careful inspection I do not hesitate to say that if Mr Snarry has the best filly, Sir Tatton Sykes has the best colt I have seen this year. I allude to the son of St Simon and Plaisanterie. It might be thought that Plaisanterie, who is a chestnut mare of no great size, though she is a wide one, would not be able to boast of such a big, strapping son thus early in her stud career. The yearling, however, is all that could possibly be wished in point of size, combined with length and quality, and the greatest liberty and freedom of action. He is a hard, honest brown, with shoulders and forehand of generally ideal character, while, if he is a little short

from croup to dock, judged from the flowing symmetry point of view, he none the less has remarkable length from hip to hock. I do not think I need write more, except to say that the colt is of a most improving sort, with the soundest of limbs and the best of tempers. . . . One cannot write for ever. A glance round Sledmere House, with its magnificent library, a brief chat with Sir Tatton on stud lore, an account from Master Mark Sykes (the only son of the house) and his young friend of a rat hunt which they have just enjoyed, and train time is at hand. I must away."

With regard to the yearling so specially commended in the above extract, I need hardly say that he turned out to be Childwick, who won the Cesarewitch and became a great stallion, sire of La Camargo, Negofol and many other classic winners.

Before the Doncaster sales of that week I visited Kingsclere to see the St Leger favourite, Common, at work, and here again comes a quotation from my article published on 26th August 1891 :

"'Here they come!' The speaker was John Porter, most worthy and capable of trainers, and the comers were his long string of high-class thoroughbreds taking their first canter of the morning on the breezy Hampshire downs. This is an interesting sight indeed and worthy of writing about, even on the eve of the Ebor Handicap, for is not the Imp leading Common, with old Cameronian in close company? Merely an exercise canter this but enough to show to a practical horseman the immense but easy stride of the big brown as he goes raking past us. What a charming horse he must

be to ride, for he carries his head exactly right and handles so delicately that a child might control him with a pack thread!

"We must see more of Common, however—for the moment we are exercised in noting the others. The peerless two-year-olds, Orme and La Flêche, show superabundance of courage and vigour in their work. Not yet do they know what it is to be really hard pressed in a race—possibly they never may, unless they meet one another, when George Barrett thinks the filly might win, but I hardly think John Porter would entertain such an opinion. In point of fact, not a living soul could really predict with any confidence the result of such a race. . . .

"Let us get forward to where they are all now walking round, standing out big and prominent against the grey morning sky. Yes, here is Common, and it needs no second glance to satisfy one that he is in the brightest bloom of health. A later and more careful inspection in his box was still more convincing. Common, as everyone knows, is a horse of very commanding stature, but it is a mistake to speak of him as *lacking* in muscular development. Common, unless I am much mistaken, will never perform the mysterious feat of what is called 'letting down.' Nine times out of ten, by the way, when a horse is said to have 'let down' it is simply the result of his having been 'let up'—to use an Americanism. In other words, he is carrying more flesh. But Common will never be a heavy-muscled horse. His power is of the sinewy order, and we shall never, so long as he is in training, see him beautifully turned and looking like a show horse. Muscle *per se* may be a grave disadvantage to

a horse or man—as Jem Smith has found to his cost—and, to my eye, Common, with his somewhat gaunt, lathy form, is far better as he is than if he were as superficial judges would have him.

"Standing on the best of legs, with back sinews like bars of steel, Common boasts magnificent shoulders with tremendous reach. High in the withers, his back at first glance makes him look shorter of muscle than he really is. Glance across his loins and back, with its slight tendency to roach, and you will find that there is no sort of real deficiency, while the vast stretch from hip to hock tells of a length of stroke when he is fairly extended which it would be difficult indeed to surpass. Common is a nice, kindly horse, as well-mannered as can be; perhaps a little too inclined to be lazy, and for this reason extreme care is exercised in riding off the downs, lest in a sleepy fit he should fall while descending the hill.

"Having seen him also do a nice half-speed gallop about one mile and a quarter with Ormuz and followed by Blue Green, I can only say that, so far as appearances go, the Leger is all over but shouting. Whether he is a really great horse is another matter. He does not require to be that. I apprehend that he will prove amply good enough. It is well known that John Porter has never regarded Common in the light of an exceptionally high-class Derby winner; indeed I believe that his two-year-old half-brother, Goldfinch, is much better than was Common at the corresponding period of last year, and in this connection it is interesting to note that Common, despite his excellent limbs as they now appear, would not stand training as a two-year-old."

And now I pass to *The Sportsman* of 10th September 1891, published the day after Common's Leger victory:

"It remains till after the race to once more discuss the winner. Is he really a great horse? The position was best summed up by Robert Peck, who, when congratulating John Porter, said: 'My word, he is a game one, and how he stays! He's no flyer, but he'd have gone clean away from this lot over two miles and a half. He's quite another old Fisherman. . . .'

"Mr Tom Spence had all along been so confident that, although he was wedged in where he could not see the finish, he declined utterly to believe the voices of those crying in the Wilderness of faces, 'The favourite's beaten,' and offered energetically to increase his support of Common. 'I knew,' said he, 'that he must win.'"

The day after the St Leger came the Sledmere sale—its unvaried date—and meanwhile "Pavo," of *The Morning Post*, who greatly disliked me because I was present and laughed when he mistook the eighteen-year-old Chattanooga for a yearling, had taken occasion to alarm the worthy Mr Charles Ashley, one of the proprietors of *The Sportsman*, by telling him that I had made the paper a laughing-stock by so strongly recommending the St Simon-Plaisanterie yearling whom everybody knew to be no good at all. Mr Ashley came to me with serious countenance, asking if I were sure I was right, as it would be a dreadful thing if I had made a bad mistake at the outset.

I asked him to wait and see. Here is the record of the sale.

"*The Sportsman*," 11*th September* 1891.

"Then there was a hum of suppressed excitement. Sir Tatton's yearlings were next on the list, and a regular gathering of the clans of buyers took place. Captain Machell, John Porter, Mr Maple, Sir Robert Jardine, Robert Sherwood, Lord Marcus Beresford, and I know not how many more, were there, *not to mention the gentleman who once mistook the eighteen-year-old Chattanooga for a yearling, and on this occasion ventured to impugn my judgment as to the St Simon colt.* . . .

"And then came the son of St Simon and Plaisanterie. I have already described him, and can only say that his sale does not in the slightest degree alter my opinion of him, one way or the other. He may train a trifle light in the back. That is all that anyone can say against him. Light or not, he is certain to race. Mr Tattersall opined that many wanted this colt, and asked if anyone would give 6000 guineas for him. People smiled as if it were a joke, but it was no joking matter, for sudden, sharp and decisive, from Mr Maple on the right-hand corner came the bid of 4000 guineas. There was a gasp of astonishment, and a really dramatic interval of silence. Even Mr Tattersall seemed astonished, but quickly recovering he endeavoured to rally Captain Machell. 'That is your form, Captain Machell,' said he, alluding doubtless to the purchase of Claremont long years ago, but the Captain, bold man though he is, was outfaced this time. For a short while it seemed as if the colt would fall to this one single bid, but Mr Weatherby joined issue cautiously. Mr Maple, however, was altogether intolerant of opposition and went up by leaps and bounds in his bids, while the other

only dealt in hundreds. At last Mr Maple offered 5500 guineas, La Flêche's price; but even this was capped with another 100 guineas.

"'Six thousand,' said Mr Maple, without an instant's hesitation, springing four hundred at a bid. It was enough. 'Have another pull at your cigar,' pleaded Mr Tattersall to Mr Weatherby, 'and give us another bid.' But Mr Weatherby had shot his bolt, and so the highest-priced yearling ever sold by auction in this country was knocked down, and the 'three cheers for Mr Maple' which Mr Tattersall asked for were heartily given. 'Confound it,' said Lord Marcus Beresford, 'I wanted that colt and I never got a bid!'"

Now I had never done "Pavo" an ill turn in my life, but he was so mad about what was written in the above extract that he induced *The Morning Post* to stop their contract with *The Sportsman*, or *Ashley's Service*—I forget which—but this lasted for only about a fortnight before business relations were resumed.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRANGE STORY OF ORME

Orme one of the Best—Superior to Fate—John Porter says he can stay—Was Orme really poisoned?—Probably not—An Angry Duke—"The Duchess of Pimlico's Cat"—Alarums and Excursions—An invited Interview and its Results

I SHALL always think that Orme was one of the best horses I ever saw, as a son of Ormonde and sister to St Simon had good right to be. His sons, Flying Fox and Orby, perpetuated his merit, and but for abnormally bad luck he would have figured as one of our best classic winners. Even so he rose superior to fate and won the Eclipse Stakes twice, and but for trouble in one of his fore-joints could have been trained for Cup courses. The idea that he lacked stamina was not for a moment entertained while he was completing his St Leger preparation.

The history of Orme is a deeply interesting one, and in certain respects no one is more intimately acquainted with it than I am. Now firstly, as to John Porter's confidence in his stamina, let me quote from what I wrote:

"*The Sportsman*," *26th September* 1891 (*Manchester*).

"'How you must like this work!' said an envious friend to me in the sale paddocks at Doncaster. 'Why, certainly; but would you be so envious, O friend, if constrained to see morning gallops under trying circumstances?'

"'We shall be out at half-past six to-morrow morning,' said John Porter, in answer to my query on Thursday afternoon, and so it was a case of five-thirty this morning for one like myself, some three miles distant from the course. No great hardship in that, but, alack and alas, my watch had stopped, and was the Boots to be trusted to call me? Often one kept waking and feeling sure it must be late. The noise of certain revellers going to bed was mistaken at first for that of men going on their morning avocations. The very darkness might only be fog for aught that I knew. The traffic sounded loud in the streets. Was it past midnight, or was it long past the hour at which I asked to be called? Once or twice a voyage of discovery along dim passages in fruitless search of a clock recalled memories of Mr Pickwick, who, when he went on a similar expedition to find his watch, forgot his room, and became involved in terrible consequences. Occasionally came an inclination to sleep and trust in the Boots; but no, it was no use; nor did it seem reasonable to alarm the household by ringing.

"Well, well, the best thing to do is to get up, be it late or early, and having acted on that resolve, and prepared for the fray, I, of course, hear at last a knock at the door and am told it is half-past five. What a fool I have been! But no matter; better too early than too late, and so away to the race-course. It will kill time to walk, and thus one passes along the streets with their disfiguring tram lines, and meets men on their way to work. The great city is already awakening to life, and it is impossible to avoid a thought of the immense business circle of which Manchester is the hub.

"Such thoughts are not, however, suitable for 'The

Special Commissioner' when about his own particular business. So let me get forward to the course. . . .

". . . A sudden movement among the spectators tells of the advent of Orme, who with his faithful companion, The Imp, comes soberly and gravely upon the scene. . . . Orme is a better-looking two-year-old than ever his sire was. That is to say, he shows more quality, and gives the idea of being better balanced and more active, while showing all the paternal good points. I cannot describe him better than by saying that he is a refined edition of Ormonde.

"He wore ordinary exercise boots, and, so far as could be seen in his clothing, is fit enough to run for his owner's estates if need were.

"At first he and The Imp do a nice canter together, George Barrett riding the two-year-old, who strides out with the greatest freedom and seems to like the heavy going. After this they walk together behind the stand and there is time to look round and see who is who.

"'Get on him again, George,' and George Barrett is once more on the back of Orme. 'Take him steadily, Marlow, about seven furlongs.' This to the rider of The Imp, and we wait in the dank, dewy, long grass and sticky ground to see the crack two-year-old come past a second time . . . and as he is seen slipping along up the straight with The Imp one feels quite a little touch of excitement. As they near us and The Imp is obscuring Orme from view, John Porter waves his hand to George Barrett to get forward, so that the two-year-old may be seen. In one stride apparently the thing is done, for Orme shoots past us in splendid form, leaving The Imp behind, and pulls up a little way beyond as if nothing had happened.

"'He'll take a lot of beating, Mr Porter.' There is a twinkle in the great trainer's eye, as who should say, 'What do you think?'

"'But it's a severe course for a two-year-old.'

"'*He can stay, can this fellow!*'

"What more is needed? I do not think we have a three-year-old of this year that is in the same class with Orme. Signorina can hardly be expected to have regained her best form."

It is, of course, well known now that Signorina had in fact come back to her form, and she won that race from Orme, but George Barrett rode him very indiscreetly in the heavy ground and no one accepted that form as correct.

I pass now to the spring of 1892, when there occurred the supposed poisoning of Orme. In fact the Duke of Westminster informed the Press that Orme had been "foully and deliberately poisoned" and had been nearly dead.

I myself was living at Edenbridge at the time, and a message from *The Sportsman* on 29th April advised me that the Duke of Westminster wished me to go to Kingsclere and report what John Porter had to say about the matter.

Such an expedition was very inconvenient, for the following day was my birthday and we had friends coming to dinner, but by catching an excessively early train I managed to get to Kingsclere as desired, and Orme was just walking off the road to his box as I drove up from Newbury. I wrote the following while going back in the train, and my memory has never been a bad one:—

2nd May 1892.

FACTS ABOUT ORME

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN PORTER

WAS THE HORSE REALLY POISONED?

"There is nothing that makes a man suspect much more than to know little, and, therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more and not to keep their suspicions to smother."—BACON.

"HE does not look so bad after all, Mr Porter."

"No, he's picking up nicely now."

"I suppose there is no doubt he really was poisoned?"

"I shouldn't like to say that; and I think the Duke has formed his conclusions too hastily. At best or worst, it was merely a matter of suspicion, and Mr Williams, who has attended the horse all through, would not, I am sure, say more, nor would Loeffler."

This was rather a surprising statement to come from John Porter on Saturday last, when all the papers were full of the poisoning of Orme and the Duke of Westminster's communications on the subject; so I paused to think it over before asking another question.

I need hardly say that the conversation referred to took place at Park House, Kingsclere, where, by the courtesy of the Duke of Westminster and John Porter, I was enabled to present myself on Saturday morning.

"But, Mr Porter, he nearly died on Sunday, did he not?"

Something like a smile passed over the great trainer's face as he replied: "Died! Not a bit of it. He was worth many dead ones. He had to have the blisters which formed under his tongue lanced on that day, and you know that a little blood in a bucket of water makes a nasty show. Well, some people when they saw this

being taken away thought that it was all up with him, but there was no danger really."

"Well, do tell me all about it and how the idea as to poison arose."

"I think, perhaps, that the idea came into my head first, and chiefly because, in all my experience, I had never seen a horse in the same state, nor could anyone give any natural explanation of it. Mr Loeffler certainly thought one of his teeth might have caused it—one of the molars that he would in ordinary course be shedding just about now. This tooth was rather decayed and Loeffler extracted it, but I don't see how it could have caused the trouble.

"You see, it was in this way. He had done a capital gallop on Thursday—never went better; but on Friday there was evidently something wrong, and presently he began to run at the mouth in a most extraordinary manner.

"No, there was no running from the nose, nor any signs of cold or fever. On examination we found his tongue was swelling and two great angry blisters forming underneath it; but at first we believed him to be suffering from a sore throat, and I myself rubbed his throat with mustard.

"He continued to get worse. Loeffler came, as you know; but on Sunday the horse's tongue was so swollen that he could not keep it in his mouth, and then it was that we lanced the blisters or gatherings. From that time he began to get better, and I cannot say that, except in regard to his tongue and mouth, there has been anything the matter with him; it seems to have been purely a local trouble, whatever it was.

"Of course he could not eat much, and that only soft

food, but we managed to give him a fair amount in various ways, and now he is taking to hard food again and going on as nicely as possible. You can imagine how the suspicion as to poison would occur to anyone in such a case, but it would seem that whatever was given him—if anything was—can only have blistered and inflamed his tongue and mouth without getting down his throat.

"No, nothing has been done in the way of analysis to find traces of poison. As you say, the saliva running from his mouth might have shown it, had we thought of such a thing in time, but nobody dreamed of poison at the first.

"Now that one can breathe again, as it were, I can see several reasons for doubting the poison suspicion. Had he been really dosed, would there not have been a strong inclination to lay against him in some quarter or other before the news was made public? But there was nothing of the kind.

"Except the state of his tongue and mouth, and the running from it, I can hardly say that there were any other symptoms of poisoning; and I know that Mr Williams, the veterinary surgeon, though like me he was suspicious of the case, would not stake his reputation that poison had been administered.

"Antidotes! No, that is all nonsense. No antidotes of any kind were given to the horse."

"It must have been a terribly anxious time for you, Mr Porter?" This suggestion I made because I could not but be struck by the really careworn appearance which manifested itself on the kindly countenance of the Master of Kingsclere.

"Anxious!" said he, as if pausing to find a stronger

word. "I tell you what it is: if anything like this ever occurs again—supposing it *was* poison—I'll never train another horse. I'd sooner break stones on the road than feel that there's somebody somewhere about me whom I can't trust. I cannot but hope, though, and half believe, that the trouble was due to some natural cause of which we know nothing.

"Oh no, it is not at all a similar case to that of Friar's Balsam. We know that was an accident pure and simple, while this—well, we don't know what it is, and there is the long and short of it.

"We removed him from the Derby winner's box, where Common, Sainfoin, etc., stood before him, because at first we thought it might be something infectious; and Mr Williams has been with him almost ever since. I shan't let anyone, except those who are absolutely necessary, even see him in his box from now up to Derby time."

"And you think you'll have him right by then?"

"I hope so."

A few more remarks of a similar character followed, and a brief intimation was given that Goldfinch runs for the Two Thousand and La Flêche for the One Thousand Guineas. The latter is very well indeed.

"The Two Thousand Guineas," said John Porter, "seems to be a very open race."

"Not if Goldfinch is well, surely?"

"Ah, he's not quite so well as I should like to see him. Polyglot does not run. He is not fit yet. I wish he was. But we never thought of having to fall back on a third string."

At this moment the Vicar of Kingsclere called, accompanied by two fox-terriers, one of whom was speedily

worsted in an encounter with a fine black cat that resented the intrusion into its garden. Whether the reverend gentleman was as solicitous as myself about Orme I do not know, but I concluded that the time had come for me to act after the manner of deputations—to thank John Porter and withdraw.

"Well, good-bye, Mr Porter; we shall meet again at Philippi."

"Say rather at Epsom," answered he, with a twinkle in his eye that spoke of no slight hope for Orme when Derby Day arrives.

During the seven miles' drive from Kingsclere to Newbury station it occurred to me that Professor Loeffler may all the time have been on the right track in this extraordinary case.

Orme, as anyone who has observed him closely must have noticed, has a trick of sticking his tongue out of one side of his mouth and restlessly moving it about till he churns up a regular abundance of foam. This he always does in the paddock before a race, and he also does it, I fancy, when he goes up on the Downs to exercise.

Is it not conceivable that he may have, while doing this, scratched his tongue on that decayed tooth, and that the decayed matter, acting as an irritant, should have set up all the local inflammation, blisters, etc?

I suggest this theory with the greatest deference, of course, to the judgment of those who are in a better position to form an opinion than I am; but I have some confidence that in this conspicuous and curious habit of Orme I have found at least a clue to the mystery. Most satisfactory would it be to all concerned if it could be proved to demonstration that some such natural cause

existed; and I am sure that John Porter would be gratified, for he seems grieved to the heart at having to be suspicious, and those who have anything to do with Orme must naturally feel acutely the unpleasant nature of their position.

Personally I cannot bring myself to believe that in these days, when men are presumably more sensible and civilised than they used to be, anyone would embark on such a dastardly and dangerous course as the absolute poisoning of a Derby horse. That favourites may be drugged at times is unfortunately too true, but that is a very different matter.

If it be indeed a fact that someone or some number of persons did in fact procure the administration of poison to Orme, then indeed we may say with Shakespeare:

"... Gold; worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world
Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell."

But for the credit of human nature it is to be hoped that the Duke of Westminster, himself ill and unable to see the horse, has exaggerated fears and suspicions until they took the form of facts in his mind. It is not for me to pronounce definitely one way or the other. My business is to set down as well as I can what John Porter's view of the matter is, and this I have done. Incidentally, however, I will once more repeat that I am inclined to believe Orme was never poisoned at all.

Now I must add here that while John Porter was talking openly and in all good faith as above I asked him if it would not cause some friction if I should publish such an absolute contradiction of what the Duke had

publicly stated, and he replied that they wanted the truth published—or words to that effect. I toned down the article, however, not a little, as I was driving to Newbury, but as it appeared in the same issue of the paper with the following letter from the Duke, I knew there would be ructions :—

To the EDITOR *of* "THE SPORTSMAN"

EATON, *29th April* 1892.

SIR,—Orme is better, but was nearly dead on Sunday and Monday, and was only kept alive by injections of milk and eggs. It is hoped that he may recover sufficiently to meet his Derby engagement. I am afraid there can be no doubt whatever that a very virulent poison was administered to him, probably twice —on Thursday and Friday in last week. I remain, sir, yours obediently, WESTMINSTER.

Personally I paid no attention to the above letter, but took an opportunity to see Loeffler at Newmarket, and here follows what he told me :

"*The Sportsman*," *4th May* 1892.

"Would it surprise you to hear that the tooth which I am supposed to have extracted is still in his head?"

The speaker was Professor Loeffler, the eminent horse dentist, whom I was fortunate enough to meet at Newmarket to-day. Needless to say that in this business about Orme one has become so used to hearing startling statements that the Professor's question did not surprise me at all, and I simply asked him to explain what he meant.

"Well, I only took away a loose piece of the tooth ;

the rest of it is all there still, and likely to remain there, I am sorry to say, as it is impossible to extract it.

"Decayed? Yes, it is badly decayed. Six weeks ago it might not have been possible to detect this, but now you can easily in the usual manner, by the smell. Before going further, however, let me explain to you that horses vary to a most extraordinary extent in the times at which they shed their teeth. Understand, I do not extract any that are not loose and ready to come away, but both from Macheath and Donovan, before the Middle Park Plate in their respective years, I took teeth which horses do not usually shed until the spring of the following year, and from Donovan again I took, before the St Leger, the teeth which you would not have expected him to shed until he was a four-year-old.

"Now this tooth of Orme's is one which is not really due to go until next year. It is one of his back teeth, and the trouble is that the first tooth, of which I have taken away a small part, is in pieces and the permanent one which is coming underneath is decayed."

"I quite understand, Mr Loeffler; but tell me to what you attribute Orme's illness."

"Simply and solely to this tooth. It is a curious case, but there is nothing more mysterious about it than there is about a man with a decayed tooth having the face-ache. The saliva running from his mouth was only the natural result of his swollen tongue, and the blisters and inflammation of the tongue were caused, no doubt, by its having been grazed by the sharp, broken edges of the tooth, and thus becoming inoculated, so to speak, with decayed matter. There is poison enough in that.

"If you knew what that tooth smells like, you—oh, you would *never* forget it."

"May I take it then, Mr Loeffler, that in your opinion Orme was not poisoned?"

"Undoubtedly you may."

Now after that there was much veterinary correspondence, but nothing in the slightest degree conclusive, and the point of substance is that, just as I expected, the Duke of Westminster did not like being contradicted —once his fiat had gone forth; and John Porter told me just before La Flêche's One Thousand Guineas that I had got him into trouble by what I had written, and that he had to go to Grosvenor House to see the Duke and George Lewis. Of course I said: "Blame my memory. Don't on any account let me cause trouble." And so it rested.

CHAPTER VII

MORE ABOUT THE POISONING

Dictation from Grosvenor House—"The Special Commissioner's" Lack of Memory—"He certainly took no notes"—Was the Duke too hasty?—Was the Horse poisoned?—What about Loeffler and the Decayed Tooth?—Shake Hands all round

THE sequel to John Porter's visit to Grosvenor House, as mentioned in the last chapter, was that he wrote the following letter:—

To the EDITOR *of* "THE SPORTSMAN"

SIR,—As the trainer of Orme I desire to record through the medium of your columns my own words (as distinguished from others represented to have been mine) as to this case.

From the commencement of the illness of the horse I concluded that the illness was no ordinary one, and was something entirely new to my experience, and when Mr Williams subsequently attended and examined the horse on Sunday, 24th April, we both came to the conclusion that the illness was the result of some irritant which must have been administered to the horse. Therefore on the following Tuesday morning I telegraphed to his Grace the Duke of Westminster that Mr Williams was at my request proceeding to Eaton that night to explain the nature of the conclusions which were to the effect that we had no doubt that an attempt had been made to poison the horse, although we had no

actual proof of it. This has all along been, and still is, our belief, and it remains for those in whose hands the matter has been placed to do their best to bring to light such facts as will leave no doubt upon the subject.

I must trespass upon your space to refer to the article by "The Special Commissioner" which appeared in *The Sportsman* of Monday, 2nd May, under the heading of "Facts about Orme," and, while wishing to be courteous to everyone, and especially to "The Special Commissioner," I must positively state that the article is not by any means accurate with reference to the interview with me which he reported from memory.

In the first place, it would appear from the article in question that "The Special Commissioner" saw Orme when he visited me at Kingsclere, but he did not, nor was the horse taking walking exercise on the road hard by. On the contrary, "The Special Commissioner" may possibly remember that in reply to his suggestion that he might be allowed to see the horse I said that no person except those in attendance upon him would be allowed to see him or go near his box.

Then "The Special Commissioner" trusted to his memory (as he certainly took no notes) for what would appear to be a verbatim report of nearly a whole column of my words, and although he, no doubt, had the best intentions, it must be admitted that he was liable and likely to err in such a case.

For instance, in ascribing to me the statement that his Grace the Duke of Westminster had "formed his conclusions too hastily" he certainly was mistaken, especially as the conclusions which his Grace had expressed were those which had been arrived at and are still maintained by Mr Williams and myself, and which

Mr Williams, at my request, went to Eaton specially to communicate to his Grace, as I have before mentioned.

I no doubt said that the *publication* of our conclusions had been prematurely and hastily made, as it would in all probability tend to defeat our object in trying to trace the matter out and bring the offenders to justice. I am, sir, yours sincerely, J. PORTER.

PARK HOUSE, KINGSCLERE,
7th May 1892.

It was of course necessary for me to refer in some way to the above letter, and I did so, on 11th May 1891, as follows :—

"*The Sportsman*," *11th May* 1891.

MYSELF AND JOHN PORTER

MY attention has been called to letters from John Porter and others published in yesterday's *Sportsman*. I have no concern with the "others," but, so far as John Porter goes, a few words from me may be needed. Having read his amiable letter, written after he had had an opportunity of seeing the Duke of Westminster, I can only say that such reputation for memory as I possess may be cast to the winds—and a good riddance to it—rather than I should stir up strife between trainer and employer. I certainly accept John Porter's correction that the Duke had been too hasty in *publishing* the poisoning idea, and not in entertaining it. That indeed was what I intended to convey; but as to the rest, I do not want to express any further opinion.

I should have written with less freedom than I did had not John Porter expressed a desire that I should "keep back nothing." The statement that I did not see

Orme in his box is quite true and is amply conveyed in what I wrote—

"I shan't let anyone, except those who are absolutely necessary, even see him in his box from now up to the Derby."

It may be that the mere glance at him walking from his exercise to that box (which he did just as I arrived) would not have justified me in writing in any great detail on the horse's condition, or even appearance; but Mr Porter is well aware of this at any rate—that my description of the horse as he appeared on that day was correct, for I took it mainly from himself in all good faith.

Let the thing pass. Personally I can say that I went down to Kingsclere most unwillingly—the only time I have ever done so in that spirit—and I trust that on many other visits which I hope to make to that place I shall never again find a subject to deal with similar to this Orme business. I like to see horses and to hear what any good man and true, whether owner or trainer, cares to tell me about them; and to feel that he and I and my readers are all friends together. What is more, I like to give the exact words of owners and trainers on matters that are not private or controversial, for the public dearly love to read them; but when I am put on an unexpectedly controversial interview and John Porter says I did not take a single note—well, I say the same (it is quite true, I did not, till on the road to the station, and that notebook is at his disposal); and, furthermore, I have no intention or inclination to contradict him in any other detail.

I wrote last week, and I repeat in all seriousness, that he said nothing offensive to a living soul; but I must

add that in my dreams (as in my notebook) I retain some idea that I reproduced in black and white what I went down to see, hear and do—to the best of my ability, and certainly with no sort of bias.

Having said so much, I do hope we may be all right again, and that no more of Orme's ailments will disturb us.

So now shake hands all round—though, mind you, I am still of opinion that Orme was not poisoned. Professor Loeffler, at any rate, will stand to his guns (I had nearly written "gums").

It is needless to go into the correspondence of veterinary professors which the Orme incident elicited. Loeffler alone had a two columns' letter on the subject and was ultimately so worried by the dispute that, being a very high-strung, excitable man, he went off his head and had to be confined in an asylum.

The curious point of the whole affair is that the Duke of Westminster succeeded in imposing his decision on the general public that Orme had assuredly been poisoned. At the time this dictum was accepted *pro formâ* by all who did not wish to annoy the Duke. Few were really convinced of its accuracy. But as time has gone on, and the details have passed from public memory, the modern generation has received the tradition that Orme was "foully and deliberately poisoned" as a matter of historic fact.

CHAPTER VIII

ORME AND THE DUKE

An Allegory representing the True History of the Alleged Poisoning of Orme and full Details given—Facts and Fancies

I NEVER backed down from the belief that Orme was never poisoned at all, but, of course, I did not pursue the subject in *The Sportsman* as it had already caused trouble. Nevertheless it seemed to be a great pity that there should have been such alarums and excursions about what was capable of simple and natural explanation. So I gave my view of it all in burlesque form, and this appeared—of course, anonymously—in *The Sporting Times* of 14th May 1892. By the courtesy of that paper I am able to reproduce it here:

THE DUCHESS OF PIMLICO'S CAT, OR POISON PROVED

(*A Society Dramalette*)

CHARACTERS

THE DUCHESS OF PIMLICO	
TOM	*Her Cat*
MRS STOUT	*Her Cook*
MR JOHNSON . . .	*A Chemist*
MR MUFFLER . . .	*A Chiropodist*
MR JINKS	*A Journalist*
MR GEORGE . . .	*A Solicitor*

Servants, Journalists, etc., etc.

SCENE I

The Kitchen at Pimlico House

(TOM, *the cat, discovered in convulsions*)

MRS STOUT. Oh dear, oh dear! whatever shall we do?

If anything happens that cat the Duchess will never forgive us! Did you ever see the like? Run, James, run for Mr Johnson, the chemist. But, upon my word, there he is just passing. Mr Johnson! Mr Johnson! (*shouting up area steps to him*).

(*Enter* JOHNSON.)

JOHNSON. Good-morning, madam, what is it you want?

MRS STOUT (*hysterical*). Oh, sir, look at that blessed cat! (*The* CAT *rushes round the kitchen clawing at its jaws.*) We *must* cure it somehow or the Duchess will go mad. What is the matter with it, Mr Johnson? You are a chemist, and of course you know!

JOHNSON. H'm! let me see. Here, puss, puss (*tries to take hold of the cat, which scratches him badly*). D—n! And a cat's scratch is poisonous, too! (*aside*).

MRS STOUT. Poison! Did you say poison? Oh dear, oh dear, to think that poor Tom should have been poisoned! Oh, Mr Johnson, whatever shall I do? I feel it to be a reflection on me and the dear Duchess will never get over it. But are you sure he is poisoned?

JOHNSON. I never said he was poisoned.

MRS STOUT. Yes, you did, you know you did, and it is mistaken kindness on your part to deny it. Our duty is plain—we must go and inform her Grace at once. Come, Mr Johnson, you go; pray do. You can break the news to her Grace so much better than anyone else, and she will not forget, after the first blow, that you were the man who assisted and sympathised. Go, go, at once!

(JOHNSON *is sent upstairs, the* CAT *grows rapidly worse, and* MRS STOUT *faints.*)

SCENE II

The DUCHESS' *Boudoir*

(MR JOHNSON *and the* DUCHESS *in animated conversation.*)

DUCHESS. You say that the cook suggests that the cat has been poisoned.

JOHNSON. I was about to observe, your Grace, that personally——

DUCHESS. Never mind that; tell me the worst at once. You are a chemist. Did you ever see a case of cat poisoning?

JOHNSON. Your Grace, I——

DUCHESS. Enough, enough! Your hesitation proves to me that my worst fears are realised. My cat, my treasured cat, with which I hoped to win the prize at the Crystal Palace Show, has been foully and deliberately poisoned! Forgive me, Mr Johnson, for my display of emotion. I am, I assure you, grateful for your prompt attention to the poor sufferer and your courtesy to me. But, oh! the pity of it! I will let the world know of the outrage. Ha, here is a telegraph form; let me send the shocking news at once to the Universal Press Agency (*does so*), and, Mr Johnson, pray help me to step out on to the balcony so that I may tell my trouble, in no uncertain voice, to the cat's-meat man, whom I hear coming down the street, as if in bitter mockery.

[*Exeunt on to balcony.*

SCENE III

The Kitchen

(MRS STOUT, MR MUFFLER *and the* CAT, *the latter still convulsed and clawing at its mouth.*)

MRS STOUT. Oh, sir, please, I have sent for you,

hearing that you were a chiropodist, and thinking that you could, therefore, cure our poor cat there. For the love of heaven, do, sir, or the Duchess will take on awful.

MUFFLER. Cure the cat? Well, I'll try. (*Picks up* TOM *by tail and nape of neck, and after a little manipulation extracts fish bone from back of throat.*) There, you see, it is very simple. He is all right now; but the trouble is likely to recur if he gets a fish bone in his throat again.

MRS STOUT. Fish bone! Then you don't think he was poisoned?

MUFFLER. Poisoned? Of course not. What should put that into your head?

MRS STOUT. Well, I didn't know what else could be the matter with him, and Mr Johnson, the chemist, said he was poisonous——

(*Enter* JOHNSON.)

JOHNSON. Excuse me, I said his scratch was poisonous; look at my hand (*showing it*). The cat, I see, is now doing well.

MRS STOUT (*in amazement*). And never was poisoned at all?

JOHNSON *and* MUFFLER. And never was poisoned at all!

SCENE IV

The Same

(MRS STOUT. *Enter* MR JINKS, *journalist.*)

JINKS. Madam, I understand—indeed our editor has a telegram from the Duchess to say that it is her desire to have all the facts of this distressing outrage published as widely as possible. I represent *The Daily Buster*, and

as I find the Duchess is ill in bed, where I have vainly endeavoured to interview her, I have, on her suggestion, come to you for the information, which none can give so well as yourself. (*The* CAT *at this moment pursues a mouse into the scullery and is lost to view.*) The cat looks fairly well, Mrs Stout, under the circumstances.

MRS STOUT. He does, sir, he does; but (*impressively*) don't think that you or anyone else will be allowed to go into the scullery to see him till after the cat show.

JINKS. I fully appreciate your most proper precaution. I suppose there is no doubt he was really poisoned?

MRS STOUT. Poisoned! Not he. The Duchess was too hasty, you know. Why, he only got a fish bone in his throat. Mr Johnson, the chemist, and Mr Muffler, the chiropodist, will confirm this.

JINKS. And did he not nearly die? The Duchess, you know, said so.

MRS STOUT. Die! Nonsense!

JINKS. And you do not mind my publishing this?

MRS STOUT. Of course I don't. Our motto is to keep nothing back.

[*Exit* JINKS *to prepare sensational interview.*

SCENE V

The DUCHESS' *Boudoir*

(*The* DUCHESS, *purple with rage, reading "The Daily Buster."*)

DUCHESS. Oh, that I should ever live to be flouted by my own domestics, and told that I was too hasty and my cat was never poisoned at all! (*Tears up paper.*) Fortunately my lawyer is coming, and should already be here. Ha! there he is.

(*Enter* Mr George.)

Duchess. Mr George, I am in sad distress. An infamous attempt has been made to poison my cat, and my servants, in whom I trusted, have had the audacity to discredit the story.

George. If I can be of any service——

Duchess. I know. That is why I sent for you. My instructions to you are very simple. You have got to prove that my cat was poisoned.

George. On what evidence does your Grace base the conclusion that this outrage on the cat was really committed?

Duchess. Evidence! What have I to do with evidence? That is what *you* have to find out. Of what use else should a lawyer be? If I had evidence I should not want you; but now that no one seems to believe the cat was ever poisoned at all, I appeal to you, as the cleverest lawyer in London, to oblige me by proving that he was.

George. Of course I fully appreciate your Grace's kind compliment, and I make no doubt that I shall be able to do what is required. In a brief précis of the case which I have glanced at I observe that a fish bone was extracted by a chiropodist from the cat's throat. Now here, I think, we have a clue. May not that fish bone have contained virulent or even explosive poison, and but for its providentially sticking in the cat's throat the villainous attempt would have been consummated?

Duchess. Mr George, your intelligence more than delights me. We need not go further in our selection of clues. Nothing could be better than the one you have suggested. You will now proceed to prove it in proper legal form. The idea, indeed, that anyone

should dare to doubt that my cat was poisoned. Do you think, Mr George, I can prosecute *The Daily Buster* for libel?

GEORGE. On that point, your Grace, I will take the opinion of counsel. As to proof of the poisoning, I will do my utmost, and offer a reward.

(CURTAIN.)

("*Sporting Times*," 14*th May* 1892.)

The above effusion exactly described the Orme business as it appeared to me, and I hope it was sufficiently amusing not to be offensive. John Porter alludes to it in his first book, *Kingsclere*. The Duke of Westminster never discovered who was the author of the "skit," but for the rest he was so far from blaming me that he gave me a nomination to Orme the first year the horse went to the stud.

CHAPTER IX

MORE ABOUT ORME

The Genuine Orme—Historic Eclipse Victory—Orme, La Flêche and Watercress at Kingsclere before the St Leger—Orme obviously the Best—The Duke of Westminster, Colonel Maude and Lord Marcus Beresford—A Great Gallop—George Barrett's Opinion and Performance—Ultimate Superiority of Orme

IT is well known now that Orme was unable to run for the Derby, which La Flêche ought certainly to have won, but he recovered sufficiently to take his chance for the Eclipse Stakes, though he was looking light and short of muscle—considerably below his proper fighting weight. How he won that race, running Orvieto out of it by sheer gameness, will never be forgotten by those who were present, and that was the only occasion on which the occupants of the Members' Stand and Enclosure have been known to burst into unanimous and uproarious cheering.

After that Orme was given an easy time up to Goodwood, where he had an engagement which seemed almost a walk-over for him. John Porter, however, was unaware that Baron Hirsch meant to run Watercress for that race, which was over the Craven Course, and the big son of Springfield was a good deal fitter to do himself justice than was Orme. However, Orme struggled home the winner after a severe race and it remained only to get him ready for the St Leger. Now I venture to think I never did anything better than the article

published on the Saturday eight days before the St Leger week, and I make no apology for giving it here *in extenso*:

3rd September 1892.

ORME, WATERCRESS AND LA FLÊCHE

A VISIT TO KINGSCLERE

"I NEVER had three horses fitter to run," said John Porter in reference to Orme, Watercress and La Flêche.

This was on Thursday morning on the Kingsclere Downs. There were present the Duke of Westminster, Lord Marcus Beresford and Sir George Maude, and it is needless to say that such an opportunity of seeing the Leger favourites was highly valued by me. It was a beautiful fresh morning, and the air on the Downs seemed positively life-giving. What effect had it produced on Orme during the time since Goodwood?

I had watched him with the rest of the string wending up the hill—and a beautiful sight it always is to see the Kingsclere horses on their way to work.

Old Vasistas had gone on first, with Windgall, and followed by Orme, Watercress and the rest. Orme was accompanied by an assiduous attendant, who seems never to leave him, and even had a leading rein to his head, by way of precaution, going up-hill! All this, however, was too far off for me to see much, but now we were on the Downs and the horses were being led round and past us.

One glance at Orme was enough. The merest tyro who saw him at Sandown and Goodwood could not fail to note the great improvement he has made. Even in his clothing he showed as obviously as possible that

he has put up muscle since his last race to a surprising degree, and it is perfectly certain that he has got bigger and heavier with his work. It was impossible just then to see how far he had developed over the loins, where he was notably weak at Sandown and Goodwood, but the Duke of Westminster said that his progress in that respect has been very considerable, though he may not yet be so good as he would have been but for his illness.

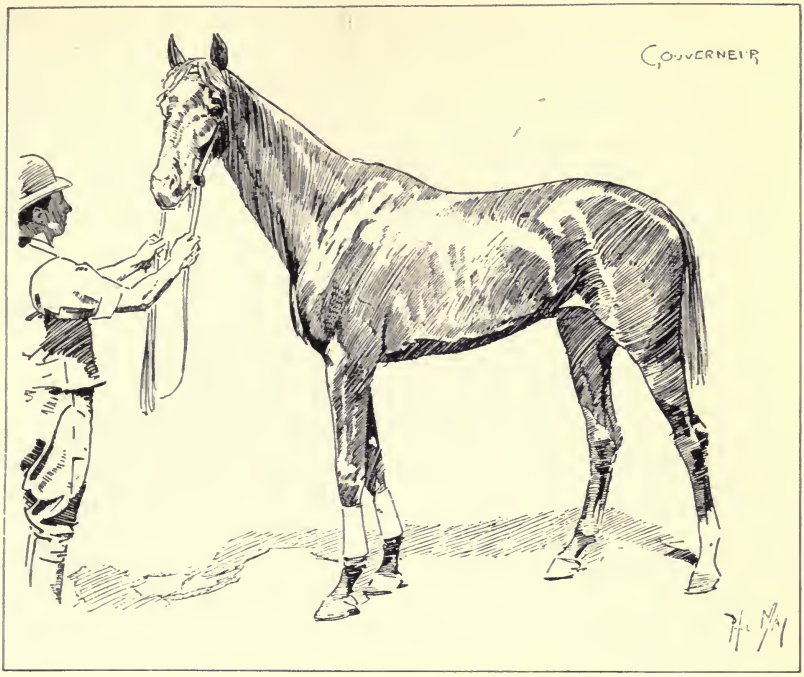
"We tried to put him on the weighing-machine the other day," said his Grace, "but when he felt it shaking under him he wouldn't stand it."

No one, however, can doubt that Orme is now a great deal heavier horse than he was, and it must be remembered that he was always a light-fleshed one, being more of the wiry sort than was his sire, of whom he is a refined edition. No horse could possibly look in better health than Orme does, and he is also in excellent heart. But enough of him at present; let us look at Watercress.

Now it would be idle to deny that Watercress has come on wonderfully since Goodwood. Always a muscular colt, he now shows his muscle in the cleanest development of perfect training, and there is a regular sheen of health on his dark brown coat. He has lost much of that lumpish appearance which has hitherto characterised him, and he has been sharpened up of late in a manner which he had never previously experienced.

The Duke evidently does not view this colossal antagonist as one to be treated lightly; more than once he spoke in terms of admiration of the big colt's condition, and again, later, of the lightness and excellence of his action.

Some distance behind these comes La Flêche, in



A Racehorse, as drawn by Phil May

the wake of Trapezoid, and those who have been taking liberties with the Baron's filly are likely to repent it before the Leger day, for she is simply as well as she can possibly be made, has a beautiful bloom on her, and none of that dried-up look which was so noticeable at Epsom. As I expected, she appears a little lighter than she did at Goodwood, for she is now fully trained, and, as is well known, she is of the light, wiry sort that don't look big when in condition. It may be affirmed, however, that this game, sweet daughter of St Simon is now better than she has ever been this season.

Sir George Maude naturally looked at her with the very greatest interest, for to him is due the credit of having bred her on behalf of her Majesty. I hope Sir George will show us some more of the same sort in the near future. He tells me, by the way, they have some capital foals at the Bushey Paddocks this season, including a remarkably good one by Donovan.

But it is now time for the whole lot to canter, and for us to go forward to a point where we can have a good look at them. On the high ground came Romance, leading Orme and Watercress, both the Leger colts going with plenty of heart and moving as only good ones can. Watercress, for so big a horse, is wonderfully light when in action, and as for Orme, why, he went just like the Orme we knew last year, nor do I think I ever saw one with such a tremendous stroke and freedom of hind leverage.

Trapezoid, a scratchy goer in her slow paces, led La Flêche, and here, too, no description is needed, except to say that the Leger filly never went better.

. . . . . .

And now comes another spell of walking, and another good look at the three favourites.

Lord Marcus thinks Watercress will make a great stud horse some day, and has already christened the progeny of him and La Flêche Arrowroot. The question as to who will ride Watercress and La Flêche is not decided. John Porter would, I think, like to see Watts on the colt, not from any presumption that the filly is the worse candidate, but because such a great, leathering horse wants a powerful jockey, whereas almost anybody could ride La Flêche. Who the second jockey will be is not settled, but I should not be surprised to find that he is one whose name has not yet been published in any of the "probable" lists. If this choice be made, the backers of his mount may feel quite satisfied, for he has all the power necessary to get the utmost even out of Watercress.[1]

. . . . . .

Next we get to real business, which is the morning's gallop. The rare old Slave Vasistas is told off to lead Orme and Watercress at a "good half speed" over a mile and three-quarters; Trapezoid has to do the same friendly office for La Flêche over a mile and a half.

"They say she only gallops once a week," said Lord Marcus, "so her next gallop will be when she wins the Leger."

Those who are familiar with Kingsclere Downs will understand where these gallops were done. Going down the valley away from where we stood, the horses start and still keep right away till they turn to the left round one of the spurs of the slope, and being lost to view for a little while, presently are seen coming towards us, a

[1] The choice was John Osborne, who had retired some years earlier.

good long distance away, to eventually reach us and pass on to the finish.

On this Thursday Watercress jumped off the mark with any amount of fire and dash, while Orme started more soberly. There was a period of no small anxiety as they neared the turn, for a flock of sheep had strayed apparently all over the track; but this was an optical delusion, though the boy in charge of the unconscious muttons had got them a good deal too near, as you could judge by the way some went scampering off when horses came past.

It is a severe gallop this mile and six furlongs, and even at a good half speed it takes some doing. We stood about two furlongs from the end and, as the horses passed us, Watercress was stretching along in fine style, but Orme was by this time revelling in his work, reaching out at his bit, and half fighting for his head, while, again, his hind action struck me as magnificent. The Duke and Lord Marcus cantered off to see them pull up, and thus missed seeing La Flêche gallop. Sir George Maude, of course, stayed for this, and it was worth seeing too. Trapezoid brought her along at a good pace, and it is really extraordinary that a mare of La Flêche's size and scope should cover such a distance of ground in her stride. She pulled up close by us, fresh and well, and but for lathering a little between the thighs, showed no indication of having done more than the merest exercise canter.

On rejoining the others we found Watercress also lathering just a little in the same way, but Orme had not turned a hair. After this the rest of the string cantered, and so the morning's work ended.

Later in the morning the opportunity was kindly

given me of seeing the horses stripped in their boxes, and the first I interviewed was Orme. If I thought him an improved horse on the Downs, when his clothing prevented any close inspection, ten times more did I think him so now. He is immensely improved since Goodwood. His loins and flanks are now sufficiently muscular—none of that weak appearance he had then—and any practical horseman who passes his hand over him, as I was permitted to do, will find that he is as hard and fit as a horse can be. The great raking shoulders and fine depth of girth are well supplemented now by his wide, powerful quarters, and the horse himself is as lively and hearty as possible. His legs and back sinews are like bars of steel, and for my part I don't want to look any further for the Leger winner.

"But," says Lord Marcus, "they always have the Leger winner in *this* box," and, sure enough, Common did stand last year in the corner box where Watercress now is. Watercress is certainly an extraordinary horse. Such power and bone are rarely if ever seen. . . . One thing I cannot like about Watercress and that is his breeding. It is most unusual in any case to see such a big, heavy horse stay, and when he is by Springfield out of a Hermit mare the improbability of his doing so is almost overwhelming. . . . There is pretty sure to be a strong pace throughout, as this is needed for Sir Hugo and the Duke of Westminster's champion (Orme), who stays for ever, and goes best when kept on the stretch from end to end.

Last of all I inspected La Flêche, who, though she seems small to an eye that has just taken in Watercress, has none the less grown somewhat since Epsom, and is in the best possible health and condition. Such a kind

and charming filly she is, too, looking as if she thoroughly understood everything that is going on. As she glances for a moment at some object in the corner of the box—"That's just how she holds her head when she's winning a race," says her trainer admiringly. "Yes, that's how she'll hold it next Wednesday," adds Lord Marcus.

. . . . . .

One last word about the Leger candidates. "We know no more than you do which is the best," said John Porter.

"Well, I think I *do* know which is the best, Mr Porter."

"I am sure *I* don't."

And so it rests, but if Orme does not win the St Leger, all the same, I shall be greatly surprised. It remains only to thank all concerned, and especially the Duke of Westminster, for the opportunity I have now had of forming my opinion.

Of course we all know now that Orme did not win the St Leger and La Flêche did, with Watercress third; but Orme was ridden in a manner which rendered his victory impossible, and John Porter says as much in *Kingsclere*. There is no need to go into that, for he proved to demonstration twice the following year that he was better than La Flêche, and the Duke of Westminster himself wrote me after the Leger that the colt had gone so well in all his long-distance gallops that there was no possible doubt about his stamina.

"He made Watercress fairly faint out of it in their last strong mile and three-quarters' gallop!" said George Barrett, Orme's jockey, to me on the Tuesday morning at Doncaster.

Why, then, was he not trained for Cups as a four-year-old?

Because by that time he had a more than doubtful joint, and, said John Porter, "we should be foolish indeed to risk breaking him down with a Cup preparation and race, when there is the Eclipse Stakes for him to win."

Orme beat La Flêche for that Eclipse Stakes, and again at Goodwood, when he had six pounds the worst of the weights. He was a great horse indeed, and has hardly got his deserts in public estimation, as can well be understood from the strange vicissitudes of his racing career.

CHAPTER X

MATHEW DAWSON

Mathew Dawson and the Admirable Ladas—Lord Rosebery's Double—Trouble before the Two Thousand Guineas—An Evening with Mathew Dawson—All Clear!—Ladas with Gallican—Needs no Encouragement by a Better Horse—Old Mat. is absolutely right—A Brilliant Horse and his Leger Race thrown away

MY oldest and best friend among trainers was that really great man, Mathew Dawson, with whom I first became intimately acquainted in the spring of Silvio's year, and the friendship grew closer as the years passed. Lord Rosebery has himself said that Mathew Dawson would have gone to the top of the tree in any walk of life that he might have chosen, and I am sure that this was so. Anyhow, as a trainer he was unique, and I propose to give a few of my own experiences of him in connection with the training of Ladas, whom I shall always regard as a horse who has been immeasurably underrated, just as Orme was.

I saw Ladas win his first race as a two-year-old at Epsom, and he did it in such brilliant style that the late Colonel W. P. Thompson, of the Brookdale Stud, U.S.A., asked me to try to buy him for 20,000 guineas. This offer was futile, as I well knew it would be, and Ladas continued to dominate the position until the next spring, when there came news that something had gone wrong with him and he had been stopped in his work. This was eleven weeks before the Two Thousand Guineas, and after a fortnight of suspense I went to Newmarket

to find out, if I could, what was the matter. I quote now from what I wrote at that time:

"*The Sportsman*," *6th March* 1894.

THE first half of the double event which I gave last Saturday has come off; Lord Rosebery is Prime Minister, and all good sportsmen, of whatever shade of politics, will join in congratulatimg his Lordship. Nothing that could possibly occur would be more for the good of the Turf than that a man who has been chosen almost unanimously as successor to Mr Gladstone should have been identified with racing since his college days; and should Ladas win the Derby it will establish a record which will be of infinite benefit to Sport—viz. that a Prime Minister has at last secured the Blue Riband of the Turf. Even the most pronounced Tory must hope that Lord Rosebery will remain in office until after Derby Day, and one may trust that there will be no faddist so inveterate as to resist an adjournment of the House of Commons for Derby Day this year. So obvious is it that Lord Rosebery has struck a vein of luck that I am strongly inclined to think that the second part of my double will come off, and

LADAS

will win the Derby. But it is not prudent—to say the least of it—to trust to luck, so let us go to Newmarket and have a look at the horse.

I found Mr Dawson on Monday evening looking much better for his visit to Bath; indeed he is quite well in himself, though his feet trouble him somewhat. He has not had any serious cause for alarm about Ladas. The colt twisted his off hock—probably in

getting up—but the damage was only slight. It was thought best to ease him and take no risks, as there is plenty of time before the big races; but when I arrived on the scene he was all right again, and I learned he would be out with the rest of the string in the morning. Backers of Ladas may, however, think themselves fortunate that he is in such experienced hands, for it is just these little troubles that so often develop into something bad if they are not at once detected and attended to. As it is, Ladas is perfectly sound and well, but had he not been stopped in his work when he was, or had he commenced work sooner than he has, very possibly the trouble would have become serious.

I have before now told you of Mathew Dawson's house at Exning, with all the reminiscences of the great winners which he has trained throughout his long career. It will suffice then to say that he was as bright and cheery as ever, and I confidently expect that we shall see him at Epsom on Derby Day.

. . . . . .

And now Mathew Dawson's horses were seen coming along the far side of the road, Roland Graeme being at the head of the string, followed by Ravelston and Ladas. The son of Hampton and Illuminata had a boy at his head as well as one on his back, and it may be remembered a similar precaution used to be adopted with Orme. As he passed me I could see that he has done exceedingly well since last seen in public, and his wiry, blood-like frame is covered with quite sufficient muscle for a horse of his type. He wore boots on his forelegs, but I could see that the much-criticised joints were in no way likely to cause trouble; indeed Mathew Dawson never had the slightest fear of that, and says he would not wish

for one with better forelegs. There was not, so far as I could see, any sign that the Derby horse favoured one hock more than the other in his walk, and no doubt whatever feeling he may have had there has passed away.

Arthur Briggs was riding with the horses, and some little distance behind came Mr Dawson himself in his carriage, so that I had the invaluable advantage of his opinion and experience in regard to the various horses. Very soon his instructions were given, and the lot went down alongside the ditch for a first canter. I could not have arrived at Newmarket more opportunely, for Ladas had been on the walking list for a fortnight. This was his first resumption of more active work. In a similar way I saw Donovan do his first canter, after being a week off, in the spring of his year.

We were standing just about the place where Mons Meg settled Melody in that memorable Cesarewitch trial which led to the Australian mare being so heavily backed, and, as Melody was in form at the time, it is clear that Mons Meg must have been a great mare that day, for she had Melody beaten before half the distance was covered. . . . No time, however, for these reflections, for the horses of the moment had now commenced their canter and would very soon be passing us. Roland Graeme, Ravelston, Ladas and the Corinna filly—such is the order of the first four ; and it was at once apparent that Ladas retains to the full his beautiful action, which so forced itself on everyone's notice last year. I never saw one shoot out his forelegs in quite the same way. He is a regular daisy-cutter, without being in any sense a paddling goer, indeed he covers an immense lot of ground in his stride.

There was no semblance of hock trouble that I or—what is more to the purpose—Mathew Dawson could see, and when they pulled up and walked past us I liked Ladas even better than before; nor, if all goes well with him, do I doubt his smothering all his probable opponents for speed, while as to stamina——

"We have never seen any reason to believe that he can't stay as well as the best," said Mr Dawson.

"At any rate," I surmised, "he looks like staying well enough for the Derby."

Mr Dawson smiled as if he thought so too.

"We have nine weeks before the Two Thousand Guineas," he added; "plenty of time to get him ready."

Another canter similar to the last—about six furlongs—was presently done, and again Ladas gave every satisfaction. After this he was sent home, and if he does not show any stiffness when cooled down it may be taken for granted that, bar accidents, his Two Thousand Guineas preparation will go on without further interruption. Like Matchbox and Bullingdon, he is a fine-tempered colt, but he has more dash about him than they have, and, unless I am mistaken, a lot more speed.

Now as to the first part of the above quotation I shall never forget how on that Monday evening poor Donat Leonard, the then Newmarket correspondent of *The Sportsman*, kept the obliging telegraph office open to receive my news about Ladas on my return from Melton House, Exning, and it was no easy thing to return from Mathew Dawson when you sat down with him at night, and he would keep asking the servant with extreme courtesy if she would please bring a little more whisky. However, I got back to the Rutland in time, and the

news that Ladas was all right appeared in *The Sportsman* of Tuesday that week. My own article, quoted above, was on the Wednesday.

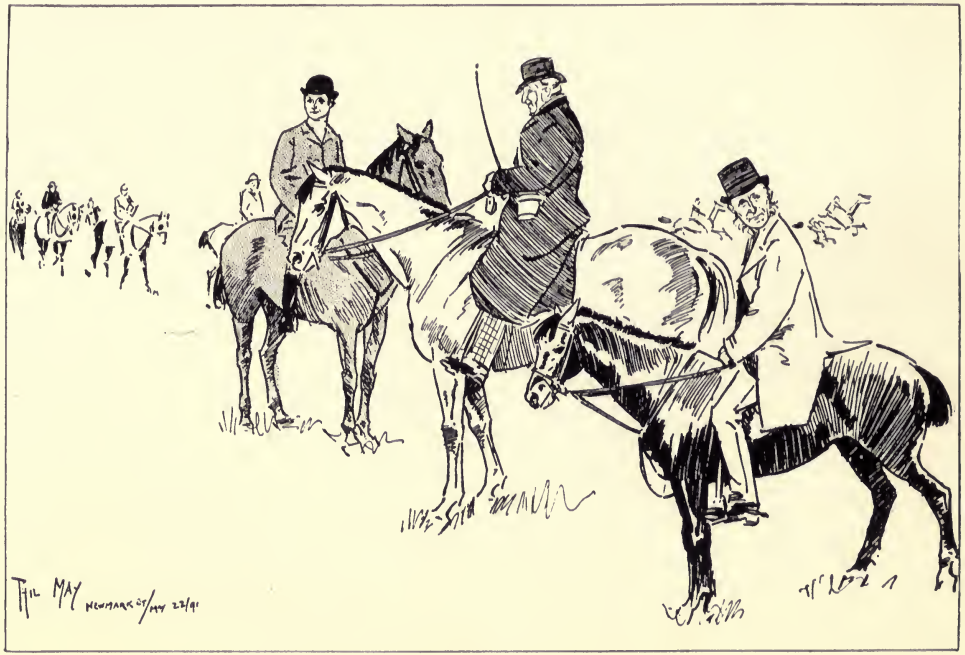
After an interval of weeks came another view of Ladas, which was thus described:

"*The Sportsman*," 25*th May* 1894.

THERE could not have been a pleasanter morning for a stroll as far as the Limekilns than was that of to-day, and on all sides there was evidence of business preparations for coming events. . . . I had better, I take it, go straight to Ladas, though he was not among the early arrivals. It was probably 9.30 when Mathew Dawson's carriage was observed on the road, about midway of the mile gallop, and presently the numerous spectators saw Gallican told off to lead the crack in an easy canter.

At whatever pace Ladas goes, his action is superb, and he retains it in full perfection, while he is himself showing the brightest bloom of health and maturing condition. I never saw a horse with action quite like his—a daisy-cutter and yet covering so much ground in his stride. People at Newmarket have all begun to swear by him now, and nothing short of a trial in which Matchbox should make a hack of Grey Leg would shake their confidence.

About half-an-hour after the canter just referred to Mathew Dawson's carriage moved back to the finish of the Limekilns gallop, and this time Ladas and Gallican came a mile at about half speed, the Two Thousand horse striding along freely and well, and appearing to relish his task, though he is a temperate sort and does not fight for his head. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the manner in which Ladas has



MAT DAWSON TOM JENNINGS

come on since I saw him last, and the only doubtful point to my mind is whether Gallican or anything in the stable is good enough to sharpen him up. . . . Doubtless if a better horse is wanted a better will be obtained, and for the present I see not the slightest reason to doubt that Ladas will, bar accidents, win the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby and Leger.

"*The Sportsman*," 28*th April* 1894.

MATHEW DAWSON agrees to some extent with what I wrote in Wednesday's issue as to the desirability of good horses taking their cue from good ones how to gallop, but he points out that this applies in the main to the early education of race-horses. Once the art of going has been fairly mastered by a youngster, no harm is done by letting him go with others of more moderate calibre.

Good old Mat. was, of course, absolutely right in his method of training Ladas, who wanted no encouragement to do his best. As regards teaching young ones to gallop, he told me that Lord John Scott used to turn his greyhounds out into the paddocks so as to give his yearlings a lesson. Anyhow there was no mistake with Ladas, who won the Two Thousand Guineas in a canter.

"*The Sportsman*," 10*th April* 1894.

"WHAT price about scientific breeding now?" asked Tom Castle after Ladas, the most symmetrically bred horse in training, had cantered in to-day, to the confusion of the ignoramuses who do not understand how blood will tell. For my part, I can honestly state that I did not for the moment regard the great victory from a personal point of view, but thought rather of good old

Mathew Dawson, who in all his long career has never shown to better purpose the patience, tact and utter disregard of public criticism which have enabled him so often to bring classic winners to the post in face of no small difficulties. . . . The enlargement on the inside of Ladas's off hock is the result of a twist or sprain from which he suffered eleven weeks before the race. Many people talked of a spavin or other form of exostosis, but that is quite a mistake. There is no ossification about it at all, and it is soft to the touch.

There is no need to go much further into the career of Ladas, one of the most brilliant horses of my time, save to say that he won the Newmarket Stakes and Derby, both with apparent ease—as such a horse would always win unless he was beaten. Now his trainer never had the advantage of seeing him run or I question if Ladas would have been started against Isinglass—then perfectly fresh—for the Princess of Wales' Stakes at Newmarket July Meeting. It was clear before that race was half over that Ladas was not himself, and no doubt he was stale from being kept in continuous training for his three big races. For the same reason he could not do himself justice a fortnight later, in the Eclipse Stakes, Isinglass then running only his second race of the season.

The St Leger performance of Ladas may be wiped out utterly, for the colt ran away with Tommy Loates from the Red House, and there is no sort of doubt about this, for the jockey had tried to beg off the mount, finding that he could not hold him the morning before. Ladas would have won that race without an effort had he been ridden by a jockey who could control him, but

he was not, and that ended his career, for the following season he could not be trained, though he was allowed to run once just to show that Lord Rosebery could run two Derby winners—Ladas and Sir Visto—in the same race. That certainly is a record.

CHAPTER XI

SAM DARLING

Horses in the Bloom of Condition—Galtee More and other Happy Memories—Strange Deeds at the Sale—General Arapoff and the "Beautiful Lady"—Mr Gubbins does not want to sell after all—The Work of Vigors in that Connection—My Last Letters from Sam Darling—Extraordinary Purchase of Ard Patrick

WITHIN the lifetime of any of us there has been no better trainer than the late Sam Darling. His horses, when he got them really to his mind, carried a bloom of health, strength and vigour which seemed to distinguish them from all others. In himself he was one of the very best and a *persona grata* in any company whatsoever.

I came to know him very well many years ago, and was incidentally the medium for selling the two greatest horses that were ever in his charge—viz. Galtee More and Ard Patrick; the former to the Russian Government and the latter to the German, for 20,000 guineas each.

The circumstances of Galtee More's sale were referred to by me in *The Sportsman* of the 15th January 1921, when good old "Sam" was still alive, but I, who was just off to South America, did not expect to see him again. Here is what I wrote:

BLUE TIT'S SONS

IT is interesting to know that the three-year-old and two-year-old sons of Blue Tit are at Beckhampton in

charge of Fred Darling, and I am quite sure that Sam Darling if able to go the few hundred yards from "Willonyx" to see them will have felt a renewed interest in life. There is no sort of secret, however, as to the serious state of health of this good and game sportsman, who is the friend of so many, and he knows all about it himself. Still, he might live to see his son train a Derby winner in Westward Ho, though it will be contrary to his own methods if the colt is not started for some sort of race before being asked to win the Derby, or any other classic event. I have had many happy experiences with Sam Darling, and know him perhaps more intimately than most of his friends, whose name is Legion. We shall have no more adventures, amusing or otherwise, in Egypt or South Africa; nor shall I be instrumental in taking other Derby winners from him as I did in the case of Galtee More and Ard Patrick, but what would you? We are finite beings, so far as our mortal fabric goes, and no man can expect to go on training Galtee Mores and Ard Patricks year after year regardless of the flight of time. I have often wondered what has become of the wild Russian General, Arapoff, who was one of the three who came to settle finally on the purchase of Galtee More. He was a large distiller of vodka, and had never been in England before. I remember he insisted on stopping at the Ailesbury Arms, Marlborough, as we drove out to Beckhampton, for he must have a draught of neat whisky, which was of very different strength from the present sort. Then, at Beckhampton, after lunch, he besought Sam Darling to let them see Galtee More do "a leetle gallop," for they would never be able to do so in Russia. It was a very "leetle gallop"

indeed that he did, with Shaddock, who also had a leg. They went up-hill about three furlongs, and the General was so delighted that when we were about driving off to Swindon he rushed into the house, tore down a picture of Galtee More from one of the walls, and carried it off in triumph. I must add that he returned it a day or two later.

THE SALE OF GALTEE MORE

It was a weird sort of day, for Mr Gubbins gave a dinner to the three Russians, myself, and poor old Tom Vigors, at the Prince's Restuarant, and it was difficult to restrain Gen. Arapoff within civilised bounds. Thus, he said to me, pointing to a table not far away where a well-known man was dining with a lady: "There is a beautiful lady. May I not go and speak to her?" Fortunately all Russians are good linguists, and I had no difficulty in explaining to him that he must on no account do so, and ultimately diverted him to the Empire, where, I thought, he might speak to ladies without getting into trouble—at least not immediately. The subsequent proceedings of that night are unknown to me, so far as the Russians were concerned, but Mr Gubbins, having got what is called the "nasty drop," turned round and said to Vigors he maybe would not sell Galtee More at all.

I did not stop to argue any such absurd question, but told Vigors to go back to his rooms with him and not to leave him until he had signed a receipt for the money—for the gouty old man was going to Ireland first thing next morning. Vigors knocked me up about midnight to say that he could not get the receipt signed, but had left it on Mr Gubbins' mantelpiece with an

admonition that it must be signed and he would call for it in the morning. The morning's reflection had brought the old gentleman to a better frame of mind, and when Vigors called in the morning he found the receipt signed all right, and that is how the Galtee More sale just scraped through. The horse was to remain in training with a view to the Ascot Cup, but General Arapoff left it to me to decide whether he should run or not. His instructions were very simple—*Remember, no win, no run!* Of course I knew from the time they bought him that Galtee More's racing career was ended, but I suppose they liked to preserve the possibility of his running for the Ascot—or what used to be The Emperor's—Cup. Needless to say, he did not run.

("*The Sportsman*," 15*th January* 1921.)

I have made a point of quoting the above extract, for it elicited one of the latest of Sam Darling's letters, written the day after *The Sportsman* was published. Here is the letter:

WILLONYX,
BECKHAMPTON,
MARLBOROUGH,
WILTS.
16*th January* 1921.

MY DEAR MR ALLISON,—It was quite exciting to read your article last night *re* the Russian General, etc. He was a funny old boy. I seem as if I can see him now, unhanging the picture of Galtee More from my smoke-room wall; also his gesticulations, while going up to see the "leetle gallop," and how they all promised themselves a treat in London that night.

In expressing your views of the subject I thank you

for the goodly feeling words you used in so doing. I am simply wasting away; I'm only skin and bone now.

I have an old book dated 1708, which I have had many years and prize very much. If you have not got it, may I offer it to you? It will give me much pleasure if you should find any interest in it.

Sincerest regards to Mrs Allison and yourself. Yours sincerely,

SAM DARLING.

P.S.—When do you start for "B.A."?

The book referred to above is certainly very quaint and full of interest. It is entitled "*The Sportsman's Pocket Companion*: being a striking likeness or portraiture of the most eminent Race-horses and Stallions that ever were in this kingdom, represented in a variety of attitudes; to which is added the genuine, complete but concise pedigrees and performances, interspersed with a variety of Tail Pieces and embellishments alluding to the sport. The whole calculated for the utility and entertainment of the nobility and gentry as well as breeders and lovers of that Noble and Useful Animal."

That is something like a title, but the book itself is far less prolix. The artist was James Roberts, and the engraver Henry Roberts, and the publishers were R. & R. Baldwin, No. 47 Paternoster Row.

The "portraitures" are of the familiar eighteenth-century sort, but some of them are new to me, notably those of Flying Childers and the Godolphin Arabian.

The book is no doubt of unique value, and it is autographed by Sam Darling to me, 17th January 1921.

I was away between seven and eight weeks going to Buenos Aires and back, and thought I should never

hear from him again, but by a marvellous recuperative power he had come back to something like himself when I returned and wrote me a cheery letter, sending a sample of his winter oats and saying he would let me have all that Marsh and his sons, Sam and Fred, did not want. I replied that I would gladly take them, and asked if it would be convenient that I should motor to Beckhampton to see him. He replied that Mrs Darling was ill and hoped I would come a week or two later, but by that time his revival had proved to be a flash in the pan, and there was no further hope. I never saw him again.

But this does not prevent me from harking back to the spring of 1903, when, with Sam Darling and the late Mr John Gubbins, I went to Egypt and up the Nile as far as Assouan. We were booked to go as far as Khartoum, but they soon got fed up with seeing temples and tombs and made excuse that I had got a touch of fever to cancel the tickets for the further route.

How Mr Gubbins became afflicted with gout before we got away from Egypt, and how I had another go of fever may be mentioned here, but not dilated on. Fever or no fever, I had it in mind to get Mr Gubbins to put a price on Ard Patrick, and before we reached England he agreed to sell him for 20,000 guineas, if he might retain the right to run him for the Princess of Wales' Stakes and the Eclipse Stakes.

So far so good; but the late Count Lehndorff—a right good man, Prussian or no—proved very difficult to persuade in this matter, though he badly wanted Ard Patrick for the Graditz Stud. He knew that the colt had seriously strained one of his tendons in the new

ground at Ascot the year before, and he did not like the risk of his running again, for he did not want a broken-down horse.

So the negotiations remained in suspense until the Princess of Wales' Stakes was won by Ard Patrick in a canter. Count Lehndorff was there, and meeting me immediately after Ard Patrick had weighed in, he said: "I am satisfied. You can buy him for me, and Mr Gubbins can run him for the Eclipse Stakes."

He then went off back to Newmarket; and I proceeded to close the transaction with Mr Gubbins.

The sequel is a very strange story, for when I got back to the Rutland Arms I proceeded at once to write a letter to Count Lehndorff recapitulating the verbal arrangement and asking for a confirmation of it. This I sent to his room and was informed that he had gone back to Germany.

Still, it did not trouble me much, for the business was very clear, and I wired and sent the letter on to him at Graditz the following day, but no answer came, and repeated wires elicited no reply before the day of the Eclipse Stakes.

Never did I go through a more horribly anxious time than the hour before that Eclipse Stakes. I had got Mr Gubbins to sign for the sale, and from Count Lehndorff I had no "scrap of paper."

I walked about in the paddock at Sandown, thinking and thinking, but never breathed a word to a soul as to what was my trouble. Then came the clear thought: "Count Lehndorff has been before the world all these years; he has never to my knowledge done anything wrong; he *did* tell me to buy Ard Patrick, and I'll stand it out."

I went at once to Sam Darling and said: "It's all right. I represent Count Lehndorff." I then gave a paragraph to the Press twenty minutes before the race to say Count Lehndorff had bought the horse, cabled to him that I had advised the Press of the purchase, and then awaited the result of the race.

It was an experience which my worst enemy—if I have one—might have gloated over, for on the one hand there was Sceptre, three parts sister to my own horse Collar, and on the other hand this astounding risk over the sale of Ard Patrick. I was glad on the whole to see Ard Patrick win, and to cable the news to Count Lehndorff. Then at last came an answer next day:

"Perfectly satisfied with all your arrangements. Very cleverly managed.—LEHNDORFF."

Later on came a document of thanks from the German Agricultural Minister, which was well enough in its way, but let me say here that while I was not unnaturally nervous over the situation at Sandown Park, I never really doubted Count Lehndorff, or I should not have nerved myself to act as I did.

I told him afterwards that no one else in England would have bought him the horse in such circumstances, and I believe that to be a bed-rock truth.

He explained that he had been travelling about among the Government studs and my letters and wires had not reached him.

I said my hair would turn white if I was ever subjected to such another trial.

Sam Darling stayed with me at Cobham the night

after Ard Patrick's Derby victory. Driving back from Epsom he, that day, expressed the opinion that Galtee More was the better, but not so the next year when Ard Patrick had won the Eclipse. He then veered round to him, but not conclusively.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREATEST OF GREAT MARES

A Good Gambler—A Cheap Purchase—Sceptre's Slight Trouble before the Derby—Her Rapid Improvement—Sceptre at Work—Sceptre and the Cinematograph—Her Alarm at the Sound and her Owner's Anger—A Phonograph wanted—Her Defeat in the Derby—That Gallop enables her to win the Oaks

I DON'T think I am wrong in giving the above title to Sceptre, whose history is a comparatively recent memory, though few people ever realised that Mr Sievier became possessed of her by being what is called a "good gambler," with nerves of steel. When the late Duke of Westminster's yearlings were coming up for sale at Newmarket, the present Duke, who was away in South Africa, had instructed his agent to buy any of them that John Porter wished to retain. Mr Sievier, on the other hand, who had had a good win over The Grafter in the City and Suburban, deposited £20,000 with Mr Tattersall overnight—much to that gentleman's embarrassment—and said more would be forthcoming if wanted.

In the early stages of the sale Mr Sievier bid with such vigour that the Duke's agent had to give 9500 guineas for the yearling Cup-bearer. Then came in Sceptre, for whom the bidding was equally vigorous, until the alarmed agent went round to Captain Machell and asked if he might consult him. He had got instructions from the Duke to buy what John Porter wanted, but he could not think that the Duke, in South Africa,

was contemplating such prices as these. Ought he not to use some discretion?

Captain Machell advised that he certainly ought, and the result was that he gave way at the final touch and let Mr Sievier buy Sceptre for 10,000 guineas—dirt cheap at the money, as it happened.

There is no need to tell here how she won her first victories when trained by Charles Morton, or how, in the next spring, she was handled by another and half ruined. "Whatever happens in this race," said Mr Sievier to me as she went out of the paddock for the Lincoln Handicap of that year, "he shall never train her again."

Sceptre was just beaten by St Maclou for that race, and Mr Sievier took to training her himself at Shrewton, with extraordinarily successful results. She won the Two Thousand Guineas, after having shown such preliminary nervousness in the paddock that she had to be taken out and saddled elsewhere. Then having regained her confidence, she made light of the One Thousand Guineas, and the public thought the Derby must be a good thing for her — as indeed it would have been had her requirements been as well understood then as they were later on. Her defeat for the Derby elicited a howl of execration from the public —the equivalent of *nous sommes trahis.* It is to make clear the facts that I again take the liberty of quoting from myself:

"*The Sportsman,*" 31*st May* 1902.

SCEPTRE AT HOME

"SHE is at least 10 lb. better than she was in the Two Thousand Guineas week, and you'll find that's the truth when you ride her to-morrow."

Thus spoke Mr Sievier to Randall, who had come on from Bath on Wednesday evening to ride Sceptre in her Thursday morning gallop. The jockey, who had taken no harm from his fall in the last race that day, looked somewhat incredulous, as who should say: "How can she possibly be 10 lb. better than she was when she scored those two great victories?" But Mr Sievier stuck resolutely to his point. "She is stronger and heartier than she was then," he added, "and you'll find it so when you've been on her back."

Discussion followed as to the manner of her Newmarket victories, and it seems that she was ridden strictly to orders on each occasion, those orders being, in the main, to balance her at the start, whether she got off well or badly, and then let her run her own race. Mr Sievier has absolute confidence in Sceptre. "She will tell us after the Derby whether she is to run for the Oaks or not," said he, "but if she does not run, take my tip and back St Windeline."

Now before any of this conversation took place I had been round to afternoon stables, and seen and put my hand on the filly. She was looking simply first-class, bright and clean, with the skin rippling sweetly over well brought-up muscles, and she in herself happy, amiable, contented, and now eating up freely, without needing all the little tricks to tempt her appetite which had to be practised between Lincoln and the Two Thousand Guineas. She is indeed a beautiful mare, and she grows on you every time you see her. Lord Coventry says he has seen nothing like her since La Flêche, but, to my mind, she is superior to that celebrity, having more length and scope, while she stands quite as high, being, as a matter of fact, exactly

15 h. 3½ in. With the most perfect shoulders and depth of girth, she has, also, extreme length of hind stroke from hip to hock, with great width and sinewy, muscular development all down. Best of all, however, it was to see her so absolutely settled and "happy"—I can use no other word to express what I mean, but she has evidently profited greatly by her two easy victories at Newmarket. Yet it is not so long ago when she would break out and shiver all over when going near any of the gallops, and those who saw her brought into the paddock on the Two Thousand Guineas day are well aware that at that time she had by no means forgotten her troubles.

I wrote when I first heard that Mr Sievier was taking on the training himself that he is a knowledgable man in most ways, but I could hardly see how he was to develop right off into a capable trainer of first-class thoroughbreds. However, he has already falsified that prediction. . . . As a matter of fact, common sense will carry you a long way in most affairs of life, and it has enabled Mr Sievier to rescue Sceptre from what in 990 cases out of 1000 would have been certain jadiness and failure. Those who stand on stereotyped rules would be amazed at the way in which the filly has been handled. For example, on Wednesday she did no work of any description, but was simply taken out to eat grass and enjoy the sun and fresh air. Moreover, there had been, some little time after the return from Newmarket, a period of desperate anxiety, and it speaks volumes for the loyalty of the boys in the stable that this was never reflected in the market. The mare either trod on a stone or hurt her foot in some other way; any-

how she developed heat in one of her fore-joints, which before long passed right up to the knee, and the veterinary opinion was that concussion was the cause. However, with the shoe taken off, and continuous fomentation, the trouble was localised and the heat reduced, but the boys who knew anything about it had been sworn to secrecy, and Sceptre's price remained steady at 2 to 1, though she was *three days in the stable at that critical time.*

The heat being entirely reduced, she was shod over soft felt on that foot, and the very morning she was sent out for a gallop there had been a lot of rain, which did no good to the felt. Anyhow, just as she finished the gallop, off came the shoe, with the felt under it, and the mare. remembering the soreness there had been in that foot, scarcely dared to put it to the ground for a stride or two. In a few minutes she regained confidence and found she could use it all right; but had she been trained in a less secluded place she would have been at a comparatively long price before now. I am giving these facts now at a time when they need cause no sort of apprehension, for, as will presently appear, I know well that Sceptre could not be better than she is at present.

By the courtesy of Mr Sievier, I had come down to spend a night at Elston House, which is close to the old-world village of Shrewton, in Wiltshire, and see Sceptre gallop in the morning. We were up and away to the downs by 6.30 A.M., and a very pleasant ride it was, for at this time of year early morning is the best period of the day. Mr Sievier has no apprehension at all that Sceptre can be beaten next Wednesday, unless through some accident, and Randall thinks she had fully a stone in hand in both her

Newmarket races. He wishes the Derby were going to be run at Newmarket, as there is always the danger of getting badly placed at Tattenham Corner; but, as he says, "I shall do the very best I possibly can, and one can't do more than that."

There are several beautiful gallops in the neighbourhood of Shrewton, and Mr Sievier has the exclusive use of some of them. The one we went to on the morning under notice is a straight mile and a quarter with each furlong marked. It is all on the collar and affords a very severe test when horses are sent along from end to end of it. Sceptre, who was as calm and self-possessed as if she regarded morning work as the merest commonplace, was to gallop nine furlongs with Doochary, Randall riding her, and the apprentice, Bonser, who shapes very well, having the mount on Doochary. Sceptre was giving the smart son of Milford 21 lb. From where I stood—near the seven furlongs' finishing post—I could only just see their heads over the crest of the hill, which is rather steep for the first few hundred yards; but it was easy to note when they started, and soon they came sweeping on at a capital pace. Almost as soon as I could get a fair view of them it was evident that Doochary—even at that early stage—was having to do his utmost, and yet this seemed almost incredible when one looked from him to Sceptre, who was striding along with such an utter absence of effort that, had she been by herself, it would have been very easy to make a mistake as to the pace at which she was going. I never remember anything like it since the days when Prince Charlie used to apparently stroll past the post with the best sprinters of the day vainly struggling to keep within hail of him.

Sceptre has the lithe, stealing action of a thorough stayer; every movement is suggestive of absolute ease, and as she slipped along past me, with her ears pricked and no indication that she was really exerting herself, I glanced at Doochary—now in dire straits—and wondered: "What manner of filly can this be, for did we not see Doochary beat Pekin last year?"

So they went on to the end of the gallop, and Sceptre pulled up as fresh as when she started. She could not possibly have done her work in better style. Doochary, I should add, is known through gallops with others in the stable to have fully maintained his form; so there the case rests.

In a similar gallop, the week before the Two Thousand Guineas, Doochary managed to hold his own with Sceptre up to six furlongs. This time she had taken the measure of him at two furlongs. Randall at that point called to Bonser to come on, but on looking round at Doochary he at once saw that the son of Milford was already on the full stretch, and if we assume that Doochary is well—of which there appears to be no doubt—it is clear that Mr Sievier's view as to Sceptre's great improvement is the correct one. Randall was delighted with his mount. "The strange thing is," said he, "that she never feels as if she was going fast. She does it all so very easily."

He will ride her again on Sunday in a mile and a half gallop, and this will practically finish her Derby preparation. On the day, she will be saddled and mounted in the Durdans and then ridden through the paddock to take part in the parade and get accustomed to the crowd. It will, I am sure, be admitted on all hands that she is at the very zenith of condition. I had

another look at her, stripped in her box, when we got home, and was even more impressed than on the previous afternoon. She is a charming-tempered filly and takes life as it comes with perfect equanimity. Mr Sievier brought her a handful of green food, and as she took it from him, I thought what a picture, and what an eventful history the two of them would make. As a matter of fact, they are already represented in the biograph at the Palace Theatre, and thereby hangs a tale. Visitors to the Palace will have noticed that both Sceptre and her owner, as portrayed there, seem to be in a very jumpy condition, and Mr Sievier also appears to be addressing forcible remarks to someone. This is not due to any defect in the photographs or apparatus. As a matter of fact, when he was persuaded to lead the filly out to be photographed he was unaware that the camera which operates the films in rapid succession is anything but silent—in fact it emits a noise something like a machine gun, and this, of course, startled Sceptre, while as for Mr Sievier, he expressed his displeasure in fairly adequate terms which, had they been retained by a phonograph, would have imparted a still more vivid interest to the picture. . . . Shortly before twelve we drove to Wilton station, about nine miles from Elston House, where I had spent my brief but very instructive and pleasant visit. I should mention before closing that the praying gentleman has written to say that he will pray for the success of Sceptre, but he wants to be put on 500 to nothing.

From the above extract it is, of course, clear that unbounded confidence was reposed in Sceptre for the Derby, but the serious stoppage in her work after

the Newmarket Second Spring Meeting was published exclusively by me, and most of us—at that time—thought, very erroneously, that Sceptre would be all the better for the rest. My description of her Derby now follows :—

5th June 1902.

I THINK somehow that everybody was, in a sense, sorry to see Sceptre beaten to-day, for her victories at Newmarket were of a character to excite enthusiasm, and her owner has won a sort of regard as a game sportsman struggling with adversity just as calmly as when he basks in prosperity. Mr Sievier was no doubt bitterly disappointed, but he did not show it in any way, and immediately resolved that Sceptre shall run for the Oaks, and she will also go over for the Grand Prix.

The first idea of those who saw her performance was that she does not stay the mile and a half, and Morton, who trained her last year, is of this opinion ; but I shall want something more than to-day's defeat to convince me of it, for if ever there was a mare that looked and galloped like a stayer it is Sceptre, and as a daughter of Persimmon and a granddaughter of Lily Agnes, where can her lack of stamina come in? My own idea when I saw her beaten after taking a position on the rails at Tattenham Corner and facing for home as if she was going to win readily was that perhaps she may be short of a gallop or two, *for, as I stated on Saturday, she had to be stopped for three or four days* between the Two Thousand Guineas week and the Derby in consequence of bruising a foot.

We shall see what we shall see when she runs again,

but I put it on record meanwhile she did not give her true running to-day.

There is no need to enlarge on my opinion as then given, for it proved to be a correct one. Sceptre won the Oaks easily, thanks to her gallop in the Derby, and it was soon discovered that she needed strenuous work—even on the morning of a race—to clear her pipes. Her only other defeat, from lack of such work, was when she had been given an easy time after Ascot and was defeated by the moderate Royal Lancer at Goodwood. After that race she blew like a grampus, and people said how unfortunate it was that she had gone wrong in her wind; but Mr Sievier, who by that time understood her thoroughly, brought her out next morning and gave her a racing pace gallop over the Craven course. He started her that same afternoon for the Nassau Stakes, and she won in a common canter, beating Elba, to whom she conceded no less than 21 lb.

These initial facts in the history of Sceptre are interesting because they really are facts, and to the end of her career she needed abnormal work—even on the morning of a race—to clear her pipes. When she was sold to Sir Wm. Bass for £25,000, Mr Sievier galloped her two miles in the morning while Mr E. H. Leach was on his way to examine her. She passed quite sound under those conditions.

These facts should for ever dissipate any lurking tradition that Sceptre did not run on her merits for the Derby. In point of fact, I think that Mr Sievier, taking the training job on as he did, did wonders to win four out of the five classics with her.

CHAPTER XIII

FOREIGN BUYERS

Count Lehndorff the Very Best—Transactions with him—Kirkconnel and Sir Blundell Maple—How he paid the Commission—Strange Trickery in Foreign Dealings—Amazing Sales of Dunure and Bona Vista—Mr Zveguintzoff the best of Foreign Buyers—Mr Leon Mantascheff still a Power in the Land—Count Ivan Szápáry—Mrs Langtry and Aurum—Cheri Halbronn—Memories of French Sales of English Blood Stock—Great Results and Sad Sequels—Hopes for Good Days to come

OF all the foreign buyers whom I have known, Count Lehndorff was the most notable and most knowledgable. He was a practical horseman to his finger-tips, and he was a true gentleman, which could not be said of any large number of his fellow-countrymen, from the Kaiser downwards. I had many transactions with Count Lehndorff, besides the sale of Ard Patrick, and one, scarcely less important, was the sale of Carnage, three parts brother (by Nordenfeldt) to Carbine. At that time Count Lehndorff had realised the necessity of fresh blood in Europe and, in a book which he wrote, suggested importations from America, but he had no idea then that *The American Stud Book* did not tally with the English at all points, like the German and all other Continental books. When he ascertained the truth about *The American Stud Book*, he turned at once to Australasia, and that was the reason why he came to try and buy Carnage, whom we then had at Cobham. Carnage was the

winner of the V.R.C. Derby and second for the Melbourne Cup. He had an immeasurably better forehand than his close relative Carbine, and had he not been a good sort all round he certainly would not have pleased Count Lehndorff.

I had bought him for 3500 guineas after the famous lottery of the St Albans stud, in which he was, I think, the third prize, and he came to England, accompanied, much to my surprise, by Trenton, who was the second prize and had been secured by the young Messrs Wilson of Ercildoune. Entirely unknown to me, they shipped Trenton alongside Carnage, and cabled me that he was consigned to me, his future being at my discretion. It was a rather unpleasant situation, for Mr P. C. Patton, for whom I had bought Carnage, as well as several good mares in England to mate with him, such as Saintly, Dorcas, Lady Hallé, etc., did not like the idea of his horse being overshadowed by Trenton. However, it all worked out right, for Carnage had a full subscription at 50 guineas before he reached England, and Patton had to put some of his own mares to Trenton. The first of these was the maiden, Saintly, and from her the old horse sired Longy, a top-class two-year-old until they took him to Baden-Baden, where bad water fairly settled him. Carnage was full at 50 guineas for three years in England, and his stock promised well. He had got back his purchase money and expenses in those three seasons, and it was then that Count Lehndorff came along to try and buy him. I had a free hand to act for Patton, and set the price at 10,000 guineas. Count Lehndorff and his son came to Cobham to examine the horse, and I never saw any vet. so careful over every detail. They spent goodness knows how long in

Count Lehndorff

manipulating his hocks and other joints and discussing this or that point with one another. As I did not understand their language this was apt to get on the nerves, for if they should cast the horse for any reason, hitherto unknown to me, it would have been better not to have offered him to them.

Then came the test for his wind, and they kept him going on the lunge for about twenty minutes. Finally Carnage satisfied them, and we went into the park and saw mares, one of which, Dorcas, pleased the Count not a little, and at last he agreed to give 7500 guineas and old St Gatien for Carnage, and to take Dorcas for 1200 guineas. It was not a bad transaction; for St Gatien, who replaced Carnage at Cobham, was sold for 1500 guineas to go to America, where he died at Mr J. B. Haggin's stud. Unfortunately Carnage developed pneumonia on reaching Graditz. He recovered but never did much good afterwards.

I knew Count Lehndorff so well, and he me, that he several times was content to buy animals that I recommended without seeing them himself.

An earlier sale to him was that of the Two Thousand Guineas winner, Kirkconnel, for 5000 guineas. I had dined with Sir Blundell Maple at Falmouth House, Newmarket, and defeated Mr Bird (who managed for him) at billiards. Sir Blundell then propounded the idea that I should undertake the sale of Kirkconnel for 5000 guineas and be allowed one year in which to do it, the 5 per cent. (guineas) commission to be credited, in any event, if the horse was sold by anybody else. That seemed all right, so I wrote next day to Count Lehndorff, who said he was coming to England and would go and see the horse. This he did on a Saturday, and went with me by train

to Cobham next morning (Sunday). The first question he asked was: "What is Kirkconnel's figure?"

This was in the earliest days of the Bruce Lowe book, and I imagined him to be alluding to the price. Not knowing what Sir Blundell might have said on the previous day, I hesitated before replying, until the Count went on: "But you, of all people, should know his Bruce Lowe figure!"

Then, of course, I knew what he was driving at, and told him that it was No. 5.

He bought a mare or two at Cobham that day, and returning to Childwick Bury next day, bought Kirkconnel and two or three mares for 10,000 guineas the lot.

Sir Blundell Maple was in most respects a generous, open-handed man, but in small matters of business he had his foibles. He got Tom Castle to telephone to me that *he* had sold Kirkconnel himself, and that I ought to be content with £100, to which I replied: "Certainly not; £250 is due and must be paid." Tom Castle replied that Sir Blundell was off colour and in a bad temper—it would be better to let the matter slide for the present.

This accordingly was done, and it was in the days when unborn foals could be insured. Sir Blundell had one mare whose unborn foal was insured at my office for £300 and that was Zee. The foal was born dead, and, all being in order, we collected the money from the underwriters and "lay low." After a while came an inquiry from Sir Blundell's secretary as to when we were going to settle for the loss. By return of post a cheque for £50 was sent and a credit for £250 "Kirkconnel commission."

I met Sir Blundell the next day at Sandown Park

and never knew him so friendly. The Kirkconnel matter was never even mentioned.

For many years Count Lehndorff was entirely predominant over horse-breeding in Germany, and he also controlled the Graditz racing stable, never hesitating to employ Englishmen in the highest positions there. Thus Richard Waugh was for a long time the trainer, and in succession to him Reg. Day and Fred Darling. The Count was a fine figure of a man if ever there was one, and I think it due to him that his portrait should be reproduced here.

The buying of blood stock for foreign countries has been to my certain knowledge associated with much illegitimate profit. There is no reason why a man should not buy a horse and sell it again at a profit, or why he should not secure an option on the horse for a certain period and turn that over at a profit, but it is a very different matter if he avails himself of a position as a trusted agent to make profits beyond the recognised commission.

I have had experience of very remarkable instances of such illegitimate dealing. For example, I was asked some twenty years ago to find a St Simon horse for the Austria-Hungarian Government, and at that time Mr Houldsworth was willing to sell Dunure for 3000 guineas. I wrote and offered them Dunure for that sum, and a reply came through Count Palffy, who was then in England, that Dunure was not of sufficiently good class, which seemed to be a reasonable answer. A week later, however, it was announced that Mr C. Winteringham had bought Dunure for 3000 guineas from Mr Houldsworth, and, a few days later, that Dunure had been purchased by the Austria-Hungarian

Government for 6000 guineas. Poor Mr Winteringham, who was not a rich man, may have profited in some small degree after the manner of a trustee of a company in process of formation, but it is clear enough that my plain offer of the horse at bed-rock price was refused, and then by some artful scheme the same horse was bought at double the price, though he had been rejected at half the money as of not sufficiently good class.

I can give a much more startling instance than that, however, of Austria-Hungarian methods, for when the late Sir C. D. Rose wished to sell good horses he put me in the way of doing it for him, and thus Ravensbury was sold to Captain Machell for 5000 guineas, and St Damien at the incredibly low price of 2500 guineas to M. Gaston Dreyfus. Next I had to sell Bona Vista—by no means so good as St Damien—for 6000 guineas, and it seemed in those days full value.

I obtained an offer of 5000 guineas through M. Halbronn of the Etablissement Cheri, and it was just a question whether that offer would not be accepted, when suddenly the negotiations were closed down, and it was announced a week or so later that Bona Vista had been sold to the Austria-Hungarian Government for 15,000 guineas!

I could multiply similar instances of outrageous sales in Russia, save always where that good sportsman, Mr Vladimir Zveguintzoff was concerned. He is a man entirely after my own heart, knowing well that honesty is the best policy, even from a utilitarian point of view. You may not get rich quick on it, but, on the other hand, Character commands success in moderation, and so it came about that when Russia was Russia Mr Zveguintzoff enjoyed the implicit confidence of his

Government and friends when buying blood stock in this country, and when he did not come himself all such business was left to me. There was never at any time the slightest complaint, in regard to any animal bought, or any account queried, and I shall always feel pleasure in the thought that I bought Wisemac for the Russian Government on my own judgment, for siring half-breds and then, as we could not get him to Russia—owing to war conditions—concluded to make him pay his way as a Premium Stallion, which he did two years running—the second year in Surrey, where he left fifty-nine foals. He was landed in Russia just at the outbreak of the Revolution, and more's the pity, for he was a right good horse. He had paid his way and had a small balance to credit.

An instance of the scrupulous integrity of Mr Zveguintzoff occurs to me as touching Great Scot, whom we had at Cobham, and as he had already sired At Last, I was anxious to retain him, but he had to come up at our sale, his owner having died.

Mr Zveguintzoff wrote me that his Government had sent a commission to buy Great Scot, and he thought it best, as the sale was at Cobham, to leave this commission to Mr Tattersall and not to me. The result was that I, who would have gladly given 2000 guineas for Great Scot—for several nominations, including two for Admiral Meux, were booked for the following year—stopped at 950 guineas, and Mr Tattersall knocked the horse down at 1000 guineas, I thinking it absurd on my part to oppose the Russian Government.

After knocking him down Mr Tattersall said: "You'd have got him for another bid. That was my limit!"

So passed away the last real chance of making good

the Blair Athol line, and I have never quite satisfied myself that Mr Tattersall, as holding a commission of 1000 guineas, did not forget his duty as auctioneer, for I should have undoubtedly gone beyond it had I known, and, after all, it was a sale at my stud. However, it matters little save to poor old Great Scot, one of the kindest and nicest horses ever seen, who ill deserved to end his life among Bolshevists.

MORE FOREIGN BUYERS

The most notable Russian buyer on his own account has been Mr Leon Mantascheff, of Baku Oil Wells fame, and he has been unique among his fellow-countrymen in saving his property, or, rather, the value of it—for he is understood to have sold the oil wells to the Shell Company and the British Government. For two or three years immediately preceding the Russian Revolution he was the principal buyer at the Newmarket December sales of brood mares, his outlay on one occasion amounting to between 50,000 and 60,000 guineas; and in 1920 he showed renewed vitality, as he not only bought freely but bid 15,500 guineas unsuccessfully for Salamandra, whom Lord Furness secured for 16,000 guineas.

Before the death of his father, which occurred, I think, in 1913, Mr Mantascheff's operations in blood stock were of a very limited character. He got one or two cheap mares—I provided him with one, which produced him a winner by Collar. I remember him coming to Cobham to see that mare and foal, and I could see that he was genuinely interested in breeding and racing, but I presume the old man was adverse to such ideas, for it was imperative that letters on the subject of blood

stock should be addressed to Mr Leon Mantascheff, jun.—that is, to the son. Later on, when the young gentleman became free to indulge his fancy, he did so to some purpose, but never without a certain amount of discretion.

When he first created a sensation at the Newmarket sales he wore an extremely wide-spreading plaid cap, which was strangely conspicuous and had a curious effect on several opposing bidders, one of whom was incited to further efforts by his good lady. "Go on," said she. "Don't be beaten by a man with a cap like that!" As a result, Mr Mantascheff was outbid for that lot.

Sir Mortimer Singer became involved in the atmosphere of antagonism to the remorseless cap, and he too outbid Mr Mantascheff for a mare, giving between 5000 and 6000 guineas for her. "I know," said he, "I have given about 2000 guineas too much, but I was determined not to be beaten by that man in the cap!"

And so it fell that Mr Mantascheff proved of incalculable benefit to the sale, not merely on account of what he bought, but of the prices which he drove others into giving. He is a shrewd, amiable gentleman, and he had the good sense to keep the bulk of his purchases in France or England, so that, even there, he was not so badly hit by the Revolution in Russia. He is racing now in France and with well-deserved success.

In Austria-Hungary there were always men entirely acceptable in England who came over to buy blood stock from time to time, and of none of them have I such pleasant recollections as of Prince Louis Esterhazy and Count Ivan Szápáry. The latter of these, long years ago, rode in a Grand National, and he used to

come year by year to see me at Cobham in the later days, a queer, dried-up old gentleman whom one would have liked to take to a dentist, for he had but one front tooth, and might have been made so much more comfortable with a new set.

He was an undeniably good judge and acted for his Government throughout many years. On one memorable occasion—memorable to me at any rate—he came over with one of the Baltazzis and another commissioner to try and buy Aurum, Trenton's best son, for whom Mrs Langtry had given, on my advice, 5000 guineas. The colt had completed his three-year-old season in Australia under an arrangement that she should have half the stakes won, and this, I think, amounted to about £1200; but he was a gross animal with somewhat fleshy joints, and poor Fred Webb, who was training Merman for a second Cesarewitch, thought, I suppose, that all Australian horses could stand similar treatment, though Merman was a wholly exceptional animal. Aurum was galloping with Merman a fortnight or so after arrival in England, and he soon developed a joint. Mrs Langtry sent her horses to Foxhill, and Robinson could never get Aurum ready for a race, though he several times told me this was the best horse he had ever had in his stable. His brother, Nat Robinson, who often rode Aurum at exercise, said the same thing.

The point of all this is that when it was finally decided that Aurum could not be wound up without the risk of his breaking down, I advised Mrs Langtry to send him to Cobham and let me see what I could do to dispose of him. He was sent accordingly.

The first thing I did was to advertise him at a fee of 100 guineas for 10 mares and close the list the follow-

ing week. Then through various agencies went out paragraphs here, there and everywhere, and especially to the Continental papers, commending Aurum, who really was about the best horse ever bred in Australia, Carbine not excepted.

This had the desired effect, but much more than the effect intended by me, for it not only brought over Count Ivan Szápáry and his two companions, but it hardened Mrs Langtry's heart, like that of Pharaoh, against letting the horse go. I thought her experience of newspaper pars would have enabled her to not be readily influenced, but it was not so, and she asked 7000 guineas for Aurum, who had never started in England.

Count Ivan Szápáry and his two associates were delighted with Aurum, and offered £5800 for him, subject to Mr E. H. Leach passing him sound. They explained that this was all the money they had in the treasury to spend on a stallion, and that they were not trying to bargain. Mr Leach passed the horse all right, and I urged Mrs Langtry to accept the offer, but she would not, and that was the only time when I found that good lady to be in my opinion foolish. I tried to get the commissioners to say they would pay the £5800 down and the balance of 7000 guineas at the convenience of their Government, but they had no authority to do so, and so the negotiations failed.

It was a tragic failure, too, for Aurum, whom we had at Cobham, with a full subscription at 50 guineas for two seasons, proved to be almost sterile, and later, when he went to Mrs Langtry's own stud, the results obtained were still worse. Finally an Australian who thought he could do better than English people bought Aurum

from Mrs Langtry for 500 guineas and took him back to his native land, where he did worse still. The tantalising expérience of his stud career in England was largely due to his siring really good stock, when he ever sired anything at all. Aurina may be mentioned in this connection, for she was probably the best three-year-old filly of her year, and she beat Polymelus for the Prince Edward Handicap.

One of the most notable men in the Continental market for British blood stock was the late M. Cheri Halbronn, of the Etablissement Cheri. He came into that position through marrying the daughter of M. Cheri, the founder of the Etablissement, and he was one of the most capable men I have ever come across. Shortly after a sale of British blood stock which I arranged with Tattersalls of New York in 1891 M. Halbronn suggested to me that similar sales might be arranged in France, and we made a sort of treaty that he should sell twenty-five approved English brood mares at the Deauville sales, and twenty-five in Paris in the autumn, all to be selected and passed by me, and we were to divide commission; nor could he sell in France any other English brood mares without accounting to me and vice versâ as between me and him.

This arrangement worked out with an extraordinary success, for I never let any mare go over that was not without reproach, and presumably certain in foal. The opportunity of combining business with pleasure was quite unique, and our party at Deauville used to be a very happy one. Alas! they are all dead now, save myself and Major Mortlock. There were Messrs R. A. and W. H. Brice, Mr Taylor Sharpe, Mr W.

Pallin, Major H. H. Roberts, Dr Freeman, Tom Castle and various others, and in the early stages we were victimised at the hotels. For example, at a leading hotel, run, it may be, by a syndicate of waiters, we all breakfasted and dined together, and when the time for paying arrived, we were all given bills which, what with the francs and the French figures, were outside the capacity of any one of us to understand. We should have paid without a murmur, but Mr Figes, the starter, happened to come in and chanced to see one of our bills. He spotted the game at once. They were charging each one of us for all the drink that everyone had had. There were profuse apologies and consequent reductions of all the accounts.

I do not know that English people are more honest than others, but they are less liable, in my experience, to practise dishonesty on a small scale—it may be because, before the war, at any rate, they had more money. You would not expect, for example, to be tricked out of change at a reputable English hotel, and yet it was the common routine in France if you paid a sovereign to give you the change for a louis—with apologies, of course, if you noted the mistake.

Once at the Hôtel Terasse, Deauville, I had arrived by the morning boat on a Sunday, from Havre, and before going in to breakfast asked the young lady at the office to change me a sovereign into French money. She gave me twenty francs, as per usual, and I said I wanted five more. She said I had given her a louis, but I was able to convince her that this was not so, for I had not a louis in my possession. She grudgingly handed out the five francs and, sticking the whole twenty-five in the ticket pocket of an ulster I was

wearing, I hung it up in the hall and went to get fit for breakfast.

Scarcely had I sat down to that meal when it occurred to me that people who would do you out of five francs would not be above taking the money out of your pocket, and I went out into the hall to examine my coat. The twenty-five francs in the ticket pocket had vanished, and the lady in the office was sitting demurely at her books.

Some men might have got savage in the circumstances, but I did not. I recognised that I had been ridiculously outwitted, and smiled cheerfully at the lady, while I returned to my breakfast. Experiences such as this do the unsophisticated Englishman a lot of good.

Pleasant indeed are the memories of those times, and what good things we sold to the French buyers, such as the dams of La Camargo, Perth II., Masqué and other great winners. M. Halbronn used to entertain us all to breakfast on the Sunday mornings, and it is sad now to think of his family, for the younger daughter, a pretty girl, was drowned when bathing at Deauville, and his son, Robert, quite a brilliant young fellow, met his death in the war while serving in the Air Force. To poor Tom Castle these French sales proved disastrous. He was very young when he became stud groom to Sir Blundell Maple, who allowed him more latitude than was good for him. For example, when Welfare, by Doncaster out of Lily Agnes, was being sold in December 1894, Tom Castle stood by Sir Blundell and urged him to buy her. She was hanging fire at 510 guineas, and Sir Blundell had bid 500 but then turned to his man and said: "If you're so keen

about her, you had better buy her yourself"—which Tom Castle thereupon did for 520 guineas.

The sequel to that was that he took her over together with five or six of Sir Blundell's mares to the Deauville sale of the following year, covered by Common, and M. Edmond Blanc gave him 2500 guineas for her, while Sir Blundell Maple's own mares were sold for quite moderate prices. That sale spoiled the whole future career of poor Tom Castle, though he remained with Sir Blundell Maple to the day of his death. He was a most capable man, but could not stand the corn that was so freely administered at such an early age. His father, John Castle, Lord Ellesmere's stud groom, was a dear, good man, of the very best, and all the family are right ones, including George, who has been for some thirty years stud groom to Baron Oppenheim, but alas and alack! those Deauville days will never return for me! Once, for example, we had Merman running for the Grand Prix de Deauville on the Sunday, and he would have won it too had Nat Robinson ridden him decently well—which he did not.

And now here am I writing a farrago of trifles about past trifles. I wonder whether the game is worth the candle; but those French sales of English brood mares, whether at Deauville or in Paris, were such cheery and useful affairs that I cannot think that they have even now died out from the interworking of the great scheme of Life and the Universe.

How, for example, could the cheery spirit of Mr Taylor Sharpe ever die?

The fly in the ointment which eventually spoiled these sales discovered itself when the French buyers became too artful and by mutual arrangements took to allowing

the best mares to go through the ring unsold, and then, —knowing we did not want to take them back to England—bargaining individually for them afterwards. In this way they secured good mares at about half value, and the game became no longer good enough. This was a great pity on all accounts, for many of the most successful brood mares in France owed their introduction there to these sales, and when M. Halbronn, in later years, used to come to the Newmarket December sales, and buy for his French clients, he naturally had not the same facilities for sure information in regard to English stock as I had, and he not only had to give more money than had ever been paid at Deauville or in Paris, but bought not a few mares which, however specious they seemed, had grave faults.

To some extent Sir Blundell Maple had spoiled our sales in France. He had, of course, good mares, and one year I was glad enough to have ten or a dozen of his to go to Deauville. Other sellers complained about his absorbing so much of the catalogue of twenty-five. But his lots sold very well, averaging something like 900 guineas.

Encouraged by that, he wanted to monopolise the whole catalogue the following year, and one could not permit that, as against sellers who had borne the burden and heat of the day in the earlier years. It ended in our breaking through the limit of numbers which M. Halbronn and I had up to that time scrupulously maintained. We gave Sir Blundell a day to himself and reserved another day for the other sellers.

Here I let go my control of the position, so far as Sir Blundell's mares were concerned, and this time he sent over all that he really wanted to get rid of, and many of

them far from desirable animals. French buyers know very well what they are about and they quickly realised that they were being offered a draft rather than chosen lots as in preceding years, and the result was a well-deserved slump in prices; which was maintained also against the really good lots in the second day's sale, which had been chosen by me on the usual plan.

At that time Sir Blundell was largely interested in the Elysées Palace Hotel (Paris), which is certainly a splendid building, and I used always to stay there for the Paris sales. He was immensely proud of the painting of some of the ceilings in the public rooms, and he had really carried the financing of hotels and clubs to a fine art. His services in connection with the Constitutional Club, in this respect, led to his embarking in politics and subsequent distinction.

Some day, perhaps, we may have French sales of English brood mares again, but at present the Exchange puts up a forbidding barrier.

CHAPTER XIV

THE U.S.A.

Business with America—James R. Keene and the Mares bought for him—Extraordinary Results—Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield—Messrs Corrigan & McKinney—Messrs Riddle & Jeffords—The late William Easton—Remarkable Sale in 1891—Mr H. P. Whitney's £1000—First Voyage to the Argentine—R.M.S.P. *Clyde*—Dice for Cocktails—Advance of Mr Lloyd George predicted—"Jimmy" Getting—Argentine Sales—Business in Monte Video—The Buenos Aires Jockey Club—Racing at Palermo—Sale of Diamond Jubilee—Friends in the Argentine—Difficulties in getting there—Trainers at Palermo—Secure Grey Fox for England—The Grand Hotel—Mr Getting cooks

BUSINESS in the United States will always remain the pleasantest of memories to me, for it is there where I first made good, having met the late Mr James R. Keene in 1887, and somehow that gentleman was convinced that I could do him good service. In 1891 I assisted the late Mr William Easton in buying mares for him at the Newmarket December sales, when we secured, among others, the mare who produced for him Cap and Bells, winner of the Oaks; but my great adventure on his behalf was when, in December 1892, he commissioned me to buy him twelve good mares at an average of 1000 guineas, eleven to be foaling mares and one a maiden, if very good. This commission, like all that Mr Keene did, was impulsive and sudden—just before the December sales began—and I had little time to work out all the necessary inquiries; but somehow all turned out well. I secured eleven

foaling mares, each one of whom produced a good foal at Cobham the following season, and the maiden mare bought was Bonnie Gal, by Galopin out of Bonnie Doon, by Rapid Rhone out of Queen Mary. This was, without exception, the finest Galopin mare I ever saw, and she would have been a great winner had it not been for her owner, Colonel North, who used to insist on her and all the rest of his horses in training being brought out at any odd time, for a private race meeting at Newmarket for the edification of friends whom he would take down by special train, just as the spirit moved him.

There must, of course, have been a lot of good luck befriending me when I made those purchases, and it is really wonderful to look at the photographs[1] of the mares with their foals of 1893, hanging now on the walls of the stud groom's bungalow at Cobham. Some of these are sufficiently interesting to reproduce. For example, Sylvabelle, with her filly foal by Galliard. This filly subsequently became the dam of the great American stallion Broomstick, whose fee is now 2500 dollars. There is no need to wonder at such a success, for Sylvabelle was by Bend Or out of the dam of St Gatien, and this filly foal, Elf, was by one of the very best sons of Galopin.

Yet Sylvabelle, in foal to Galliard, cost only 900 guineas. Broomstick, son of Elf, won fourteen races to the value of 75,225 dollars, and he has three times headed the list of winning sires in U.S.A.

Atala (by Uncas) is almost as interesting, for she was bought, in foal to Amphion, for 700 guineas, and her filly foal (produced at Cobham) was named Harpsichord,

[1] The photographs are by Clarence Hailey, whose portraits of blood stock were then just coming into favour.

on arrival at the States. This filly was a winner there and became the dam of Harmonicon, who, on being sent over to this country, proved himself to be the fastest horse in England. Moreover, he was by Disguise II. who was out of Bonnie Gal, the one maiden mare sent out with the consignment. Disguise II. also raced in this country for Mr Keene, being trained by the late Sam Darling. He was a horse of high class, running third for the Derby and winning the Jockey Club Stakes.

Another interesting portrait is that of Sundown (by Springfield out of Sunshine), whom I bought, in foal to Ayrshire, for 1000 guineas. She is shown with her colt foal at foot, and Shipley, the present Cobham stud groom, holding her. He was then nearly thirty years younger than now, but can easily be recognised by those who know him. Sundown's colt foal, Peep o' Day, turned out to be an excellent race-horse, winning no less than nineteen times, and he was for years one of the most successful stallions in U.S.A.

I do not wish to go into full details of all the mares, but Fair Vision, who cost 1500 guineas, should be mentioned. She was an own sister to Juggler and Necromancer, and was in foal to Minting. Her portrait with her Minting filly foal is given, and she produced many excellent winners in her new home. One of these, Peter Quince, is still one of the leading sires in U.S.A. Another mare who did very well was Editha (sister to Melton) with a colt foal by Beau Brummel; and there was Ixia, a beautiful daughter of Springfield and Crocus (sister to Sunshine), with a colt by Donovan. She cost 2000 guineas and Editha 1000 guineas. Fancy buying such mares nowadays for prices like that!

Photograph : Clarence Hailey, Newmarket, 1893.

FAIR VISION (SISTER TO JUGGLER) WITH FILLY BY MINTING

Photograph : Clarence Hailey, Newmarket, 1893.

SUNDOWN (BY SPRINGFIELD OUT OF SUNSHINE), WITH COLT FOAL (PEEP O' DAY) BY AYRSHIRE

Sundown and Ixia came up among the very first lots on the third day of the sales, and I had just got a cable from Mr Keene, to whom I had reported progress:

"Have cabled £6000 your credit with Tattersall. Very pleased. You can exceed instructions if you think fit."

On this I left breakfast and hastened to Park Paddocks, for I was now determined to buy these two beautiful mares. It was before the days of the Figure Guide, but I knew well the value of that blood.

Captain Machell had also come in a hurry to secure the same two names, but fortified by Mr Keene's cable I outbid him for both of them. Sundown proved to be of really priceless value, but Ixia died a year or two after she reached Kentucky, not, however, before she had produced Tripping, who won seven races.

It would be tedious to elaborate on these old-time happenings, but I venture to think that the portraits of some of the mares and foals, as they were at Cobham in 1893, will be of interest, for they have assisted very largely in making American Turf history. I bought a good many more for Mr Keene at later periods, such as Lady Minting, Rose Garland, etc., but those I have referred to specially remain as the first loves, and deservedly so.

I have culled a few facts about some of them from the American books, and it will perhaps be of interest to publish them here:

SUNDOWN (cost 1000 gns.) is dam of *Peep o' Day*[1] (the great sire and winner of nineteen races), *Noonday* (winner in England and America, and dam of the winners of over sixty races, including Besom, winner

[1] Actual produce of the original mares printed in italics.

of twenty-nine races and $21,235; High Noon, winner of twelve races and $18,220; High Time, winner of the Hudson Stakes and $3950; Suffragette, winner of five races and $8370; Vandergrift, winner of seven races and $4751; Summer Cloud, Suffragist and Meeting House, winner in England), *Fading Light* (winner and dam of a winner), *Crepuscule* (winner in England), *Obscurity* (dam of Gabrio), *Umbra* (dam of four winners), *Nightfall* (winner and dam of Campfire and Whipporwill) and *Last Rays* (dam of First Rays).

Atala (cost 700 gns.) is dam of *Harpsichord* (winner and dam of Harmonicon, winner of twelve races and $35,330, and considered the fastest horse in England up to a mile, and sire of winners: Hilarious, winner of $9240 as a two-year-old, unbeaten as a three-year-old, winning the Withers, Carlton and Tidal Stakes of the value of $31,685, also a winner as a four, five and six year old, and sire of winners—Forum, Wild Refrain, Annie Thompson, Sanctus and Spinet, all winners), *Brush By* and *Suavita.*

Bonnie Gal (cost 1600 gns.) is dam of *Disguise* (winner of $37,407, including, in England, the Jockey Club Stakes, and third in the Derby, and sire of the good winners, Iron Mask, Maskette, Melisande, Harmonicon, Helmet, Ladasette, Footpad, Five Aces, Mystify, Mascarada, Cowl, Striker, Ambrose, M'Corkle, Morning Glory, Esperanto, Court Dress, Cabochon, Pope Joan, Phantom Light, Veil, Pierrot, Grimaldi, Masks and Faces, Incognito, Masquerade, Salvolatile, Masqué, Infanta, Sandal, Prince of Como, Bulse, Comely, Elfin Queen, My Friend, etc.), *Coy Maid* (winner of the Packer Stakes, Bellrose Stakes, etc., and out of seven starts as a two-year-old won six times and placed third

once, her first time out, and dam of Coy Lad—winner and sire of winners—and the winners Sam Reh, Pan Maid, Meditation and Star Maid), *Belgravia* (winner and dam of Grosvenor, frequent winner for five seasons; Bonnie Mary, winner of the Fashion, Juvenile and Great American Stakes and $15,600 in 1919; Black Toney, winner of twelve races and $12,815, and sire of Miss Jemima, his first starter-out in 1919, who won eight races and $20,055; and Herder, a winner) and *Mayfair* (dam of Gerrard and May Queen).

Fair Vision (cost 1500 gns.) is dam of *Horoscope* (a winner and sire), *Miss Jenny* (winner of fourteen races and dam of Gold Ten, winner and dam of the winners Ten Point, Gold Point, Miss Ogden and Brighton), *Runaway Girl* (winner and dam of Special Licence, winner; Gretna Green, winner of the Carter Handicap, etc.; Meggs Hill, stakes winner and producer; Infatuation, Wedding Bells, winner in England and America; Pankhurst, dam of Upset, etc.), *Idle Fancy* (dam of Idle Tale, Ralph S. and Passing Fancy, all winners, and Fairy Story, dam of Wand), *Peter Quince* (winner of five races and sire of many good winners; in 1917 he was sixth in the American stallion list with twenty-four winners of sixty-two races and over $75,000, including Dominique, $11,408, Papp, $41,000, etc.), *Trance* (winner of twenty-seven races) and *Dreaming* (dam of Vague).

Editha (cost 1000 gns.) is dam of *Dominoes* (dam of Dominant, winner of $19,720; Domino Noire, winner and dam of Ethel D. Dartworth; Cane Run and Blaise; Earl's Court, winner; Nankeen, winner in England; Diversion and Mystify), *Hurst Park* (winner of ten races in U.S.A., also a winner in England and a sire), *Pope Joan* (winner of $8330 and dam of Jocasta,

Joannina and Militant), *Fantasque* (dam of Fantam Bala, Red Domino, Odalisque and Minuet).

Sylvabelle (cost 900 gns.) is dam of *Elf* (dam of Broomstick, winner of fourteen races and $75,225, and sire since 1911 of the winners of $723,782. He has three times headed the list of winning sires. His winners include Cudgel, twenty-eight wins and $69,473; Leochares, fifty-five wins and $56,595; Regret, nine wins and $35,003, etc., etc. Elf is also dam of Fairy Dell, a winner for four seasons and dam of winners: Broom Handle, winner for three seasons, including the Montgomery Handicap; Elfall, stakes winner; Whisk Broom, winner and dam of Bird Man, Broom Sweep, Broom Dell, winner and dam of winners), *Pontifex* (winner), *Reformer* (winner), *Flying Squadron* (good winner and dam of Kearsage, a frequent winner in England for six seasons); *Frontenac* (winner of twenty-five races and $15,290, and sire of winners), *Molesey* (winner of thirteen races), *Melisande* (winner of seven races in U.S.A., and also a winner in England), *Clarion* (stakes winner), *Little Buttercup* (winner for six seasons) and *Searchlight.*

The late Major Foxhall Daingerfield used to manage Mr James R. Keene's stud, Castleton, Ky., and nobody realised better than he did the value of those mares. A sequel to this was that, many years later, his daughter, Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield, having undertaken the management of a stud for Messrs Corrigan & McKinney, secured for them all the best of the Castleton stock when sold, and advised them to get me to send them some more from England. This was done to the best of my ability, and the consignments included a beautiful three-year-old own sister to the Tetrarch for 1500 guineas,

SYLVABELLE (BY BEND OR OUT OF ST. GATIEN'S DAM) WITH FILLY (ELF) BY GALLIARD. ELF IS DAM OF BROOMSTICK

BONNIE GAL (BY GALOPIN OUT OF BONNIE DOON), DAM OF DISGUISE II AND MANY OTHER WINNERS

Photographs: Clarence Hailey, Newmarket, 1893.

ATALA (BY UNCAS) WITH FILLY FOAL (HARPSICHORD BY AMPHION). HARPSICHORD IS THE DAM OF HARMONICON

and Marian Hood, half-sister (by Martagon) to Polymelus, with a filly by Prince Palatine and covered by Sunstar, for 2000 guineas. This was a really amazing purchase, for the mare's three-year-old filly, Sunbonnet, by Sunstar, was then in the States, having been exported as a yearling, and she won the Kentucky Oaks, shortly after her dam and half-sister arrived. The mare was in foal to Sunstar all right and produced a colt which, as a yearling, sold for 25,000 dollars.

Unfortunately Messrs Corrigan & McKinney dissolved partnership for some private reason and sold off their stud. Marian Hood and foal made fully three times what they had cost, and, as I have stated above, the mare's produce of the following year made 25,000 dollars as a yearling.

I have never been to Kentucky, but I know well enough that there you deal with gentle-people who retain the traditions of the old Southern States, and I live in hopes of still going there. Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield is a great lady and quite indefatigable. The break-up of the Corrigan-McKinney combination did not daunt her. She bought some of the best of the stock herself, and now she has taken on the management of the great horse, Man o' War, for Messrs Riddle & Jeffords. Again it happened that I was remembered, and commissioned to buy mares for Man o' War in December 1920, which I did, though the prices ruled much higher than was generally anticipated.

Now all this emanates from the original James R. Keene Commission in 1892. I never met Miss Daingerfield's father, nor have I ever had the pleasure of meeting her, and this surely indicates that if you really understand your job, and have no idea of

working on the "get rich quick" plan, good work pays you even to the latter end of your life.

I say I have never met Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield, but that is not to say I do not know her, from correspondence, to be a lady exactly in accord with my own views about blood stock, and individually, I am sure, a true sportswoman. One gets to know people in many parts of the world, and that is half the pleasure of a business like mine; but I think I have never, in this way, seen a friend of the right sort so clearly as Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield, connecting as she does so tenaciously—if I may use the word—my own services in the James R. Keene Commission of 1892 with what I am able, thank goodness, to do to-day.

The late William Easton was a wonderful auctioneer, but in connection with Tattersalls of New York he proved impossible, though not before I had arranged in 1891 for a large consignment of stock, numbering over a hundred, to go out for sale in New York. How this was brought about passes my recollection, for it was before our office existed, and I did the whole business, such as it was, from my private house.

All sorts of animals, stallions, brood mares, yearlings and foals, were included in that consignment, and most of them went over by the White Star Line cattle boats, but some by the then almost unknown Atlantic Transport Line of Williams, Torrey & Field. In most cases owners sent their own men in charge or even went themselves; and nothing in my experience has ever been more curious than that the late Mr Smith of Whimple should have sent out six Hawkstone yearlings with his late son in charge and that Mr W. Clack, from a near-by place in Devonshire, should also have taken

out a Hawkstone yearling, with other stock, on the same ship with young Smith of Whimple.

Thus they made the voyage all the way to New York, and when the sale came on, Clack's lots were earlier in the catalogue than Smith's, who, wanting to set a good price on Hawkstone's stock, bid up freely for Clack's yearling by that horse. In so doing he was fairly caught by the auctioneer and the yearling was knocked down to him at 2500 dollars. In vain did he ask Clack to let him off this deal, for the yearling had not really belonged to Clack—and the awful sequel was that when the Whimple Hawkstones came up they realised very little more than this one animal had been bought for.

What happened to the bought one I do not know, but it is certain that old Smith had to be cabled to for money to get his son home, and the truth was never told to the old man, though I was sorely tempted to tell it. He was told by his son that the expenses of the sale had been such as to absorb all the receipts and I who had arranged the sale came in for consequent blame from the old man. It is almost incredible that two neighbours in Devonshire should have taken their yearlings out on the same ship to sell in America with such a ridiculous result. The marvellous thing was, that sale, got up as it was in hotch-potch style, was a great success, resulting in a total sum of £30,000.

William Easton, as I have stated, was a great auctioneer, and though, as Lord Wyfold, who was the Chairman of Tattersalls of New York, knows, he was quite out of control in business matters, he had other elements of greatness, as I know.

A good many years later he came over to London

to undergo an operation of a serious character, and whether the tumour dealt with was a malignant growth or not could not be immediately discovered. It was just before the late Mr J. B. Haggin was to sell off his immense stud—a sale which was to occupy six days.

I went to see Easton after his operation, and found him so weak he could not sit up in bed without my helping him. He said he was returning to New York by that week's boat to conduct the Haggin sale, and, thanks to two nurses, he did in fact make that voyage, and he did work through the whole six days' sale on arrival. He had to do it from a chair, of course, and the first day's work brought on a very high temperature, but he battled through to the end of the last day.

Then, too, a few months later, when he came to England again to see the doctors, they had by that time discovered that the growth they had cut out was a malignant one. So far from being daunted by this report, he told them to go the devil; said he didn't believe a word of what they said, and went back to the States, where he did good work for two more years.

There had been no mistake in the diagnosis, but there is no doubt that his courage deferred the end for those two years.

Americans are not readily understood by people in this country, who are slower of thought and imagination, but I think I understand them fairly well. Thus the late Mr H. P. Whitney throughout a long period used to write to me for advice on breeding questions, but never even acknowledged the answers. When Saintly with a foal by Trenton and covered by him again was coming up for sale from Cobham, he wrote to ask me

what she was worth, and I replied 3000 guineas. No answer came, but his trainer, John Huggins, whom everyone liked, appeared at the sale and bid for Saintly and foal up to 3000 guineas, and someone else got them for 3100 guineas.

That sort of thing would have annoyed most Englishmen, but it did not annoy me, and the sequel was that some time later, when I went to 46A Pall Mall, our secretary said: "There is a letter from Mr Whitney with a cheque. How much do you think it is for?" I replied: "Maybe £100." He handed it to me and it was for £1000.

The letter itself was delightfully expressed, and I shall always regret that, as I valued it greatly, I kept it in a note-case carried in my breast-pocket, and this was abstracted some years ago by pilfering gentry to whom I would willingly have given the other contents.

Mr Whitney wrote, in legal phraseology, that the cheque was merely a "retainer" and that time would bring "Refreshers," which indeed happened the following week, when I sold him Rambling Katie for—I think —4500 guineas.

This will perhaps give some idea that in dealing with Americans you have to cast adrift all insular ideas as to what you are entitled to expect.

SOUTH AMERICA

My first visit to Buenos Aires was in 1904, on the good old R.M.S.P. *Clyde*, which I had boarded off the Needles in 1893, when Mr Somerville Tattersall, John Porter and I had gone off on the tender from Southampton to meet her, as she was bringing Ormonde on the first stage of his journey to California. A story

got about on that occasion that Ormonde had recognised his old trainer, but having been present at the meeting, such as it was, I must honestly declare that there was no sign of such recognition. The horse landed in good shape and passed some months that spring and summer with nine mares at Molecomb, but virtue had gone out of him, and never in all the years after he reached California, later on, did it return, though an occasional foal was registered to his credit.

The *Clyde* in 1893 was the latest thing in Royal Mail luxury, and when I went out on her twelve years later there was still nothing better. She was a very "happy" ship too, and the late Captain Tindal, who commanded her, was one of the best. I shall always remember, however, that she rolled at an angle of forty-five degrees between Vigo and Lisbon; that a stout old lady was shot by one such roll from her revolving seat in the saloon a distance of about five yards; that my big cabin trunk, being then unopened, broke loose from under the bunk where I was in a three-berth cabin which I had to myself, and that as I, like a fool, had turned in at the side of the cabin remote from the electric switch I could not get to it in the darkness, with the trunk charging about like a battering-ram.

Meanwhile a Portuguese in the next cabin was being vociferously sea-sick, and alternately praying to all his gods, until some other passenger, of rougher cast, came along and roundly cursed him, after rapping violently at his cabin door.

There was really not the least cause for alarm—unless indeed the engines had given out—for the *Clyde* was a splendid sea-boat, with a good deep keel

on her, and however far she rolled over you could feel that she had a firm grip and was coming back.

Still, she was inconvenient as we should think now—you could not get into the smoke-room from below, and in bad weather had to struggle as best you could along the deck to the after and only entrance. We made bad weather that voyage all the way to Madeira, and two nights running, while I was hanging on by the rail and working my way to the smoke-room, I was caught by a sea which she shipped in the waist and it came swish! up to my waist, just as I had turned the corner to the smoke-room door. Needless to say, the emigrants, who at that time were quartered aft, were battened down or they would have been half drowned.

Of course my advent to the smoke-room on those two occasions caused much amusement, but really in those days one took things as they came, and the voyage after Madeira was delightful.

It was then that I learned for the first time the mysteries of poker dice, in the harmless sense of throwing them for cocktails, and always before lunch Captain Tindal would descend from the bridge and signal to me as he passed me on deck. This meant that we engaged in the hazard of the die, and I know that fortune almost invariably favoured me, and in this respect it has notoriously done since, as many Royal Mail travellers can testify.

It seems absurd, of course, to say that there can be anything but the element of chance in throwing dice, but I have noticed that those who use rough methods and dump the dice-box down almost invariably fail of a satisfactory result, whereas if you humour the box and trickle them out with a delicate turn of the wrist

you are on far surer ground. I am not writing of what I do not know, for many have seen me do it.

I suppose there is no more enjoyable winter voyage than that from Southampton to Buenos Aires and back. The sea very rarely troubles you and there are so many intermediate ports of call—Vigo, Lisbon, Madeira, St Vincent (sometimes), Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio, Santos and Monte Video. Many of these are of great interest, especially Rio, where there is always a stay of about twenty-four hours, and to take a launch and cruise about in the bay for three or four hours, whether in the evening or the daytime, is a truly pleasant experience.

On these voyages you invariably meet someone worth meeting. Thus among my first fellow-passengers on the *Clyde* was Mr J. W. Philipps, now Lord St Davids, who knows more than anybody does about Argentine railways, and has taken no small part in racing and horse-breeding. He was then a Member of Parliament, and I remember with what confidence he foretold to me the advance of Mr Lloyd George, as we sat together at Captain Tindal's table. To me, in those days, such an advance seemed an unimaginable horror, but it has come about nevertheless.

My first arrival at Buenos Aires was untimely, for there had been a military revolution in the night which had succeeded in all important parts of the country except in the capital itself, where it had been cleverly checked just in time; but it was a case of martial law, and a serious question whether we should be allowed to land.

In fact we did not land until midday, and then police with rifles were standing at all the street corners and

the banks were closed. Having a credit at one of these banks, and only about £5 in cash left after the voyage, I did not feel comfortable, but I soon met good friends, the late Mr William Samson, owner of many good horses out there, and Mr James Harmer Getting, with whom I have been associated ever since. He is one of the oldest members of the Jockey Club, of which I had already been made a temporary member, and having been installed at the Grand Hotel, I was soon in perfect comfort, for the banks reopened in the afternoon and there was no more anxiety about money.

It was then that I first saw racing at Palermo and one or two of the Argentine breeding studs. It was all very pleasant and instructive, and made one wish for further visits to the country.

I have paid such visits many times since on the poor old *Amazon*, which was sunk in the war, the *Avon*, the *Aragon*, the *Asturias*, the *Almanzora* and the *Andes*—on some of them more than once—with the late Captains Spooner and Doughty, the still flourishing and inimitable Captain Dix, Captain Collins, Captain Mason and others, and I have had ample opportunity to appreciate the value of the British thoroughbred as a friendly pioneer in that great country, where no money has been spared in buying the best possible stallions, such as Diamond Jubliee, Jardy, Val d'Or, Cyllene, Polar Star, Your Majesty, Craganour, and, best of all, Tracery and his son, The Panther.

I remember the earlier period of Argentine importations before the financial crisis stopped such business for a good many years, and in those days Mr W. Kemmis took out Whipper In, while Gay Hermit and St Mirin were also imported, the latter to the San

Jacinto stud, where he left many great brood mares and also established a flourishing male line of Hermit. Another of those early importations was Orbit, winner of the Eclipse Stakes, and he too made very good ; but there came a blank of ten or fifteen years before the financial equilibrium was restored, and since then blood-stock business in the Argentine has been humming.

Some years before I went to South America I had sent Ercildoune to Uruguay, through the great auctioneer firm of Adolfo Bullrich & Co. of Buenos Aires, Senor Carlos Reyles being the buyer. This was in 1901, and the price was 2000 guineas. It is a mystery why this horse should not have made a successful stallion, for he was really the best son of Maid Marian, and, after winning the Duke of York Stakes, only just missed the Cesarewitch, by the narrowest margin — and he was lame on the morning of that race. His half-brothers, Polymelus and Grafton, made great names, but Ercildoune was an utter failure at the stud— possibly on account of Uruguayan conditions. Senor Carlos Reyles later on got me to buy him a good many brood mares, most of which did well, and he himself came to England more than once to superintend purchases. This was rather embarrassing, for I could not speak his language nor he mine, and he was provided with an interpreter who sat between us at sales, but was entirely ignorant of blood-stock terms, or anything else to do with horses. Thus, while the late Sir Blundell Maple's stock was being sold off in Park Paddocks, I sat on the far side of the ring with the interpreter between me and Senor Reyles, I doing the bidding. This went on all right for a while, and some purchases were made. Then when horses

in training were being offered I saw Senor Reyles start bidding on his own account for a two- or three-year-old gelding, and at once asked the interpreter: "Does he know that this is a gelding?"

The interpreter spoke volubly to Senor Reyles, who none the less continued to bid and ultimately bought the animal for a considerable sum. It was sent out with the mares to Monte Video, and then, for the first time, he discovered what he had done and wished to claim his money back from Messrs Tattersall. Whether he blamed me or not in the matter I cannot say, but, except for sending him out Le Samaritain (sire of Roi Herode and Grey Fox), I don't think I was ever again asked to assist him.

This was all before I had been to Buenos Aires, and I had also made the acquaintance of Ignacio Correas, Emilio Casares and others of the best-known blood-stock enthusiasts out there; but my first visit was to me a delightful revelation, and I have continued, ever since, making better and better friends there, and using such judgment and experience as I possess to assist them in blood-stock breeding.

It would be impossible to find in any part of the world two better sportsmen and gentlemen than Senor Saturnino Unzue, and Senor Ignacio Correas. The former of these was last year the President of the Jockey Club, and the latter the President of the *Comision del Stud Book*, in connection with which many things are done that might with advantage be done in this country. Exact markings of foals are taken on simple diagrams as a condition of registration. Births dates are also given. This is what I have advocated for years, and it could be done without any

difficulty while the returns are being sent in; as also, when a mare has been mated with two horses, the last service dates by each horse should be included.

Other Argentine notables whom I have met in connection with the Jockey Club are Senors Federico de Alvear, Adolfo G. Luro, Dr Benito Villenueva, Ignacio Unánue, Martinez le Hoz, and many others; but it would be futile in the limits of this volume to dilate on my many happy visits to the Haras San Jacinto, about eighty miles from Buenos Aires, or to the Haras Las Ortigas, not more than twenty miles away, where Diamond Jubilee has for long held court with much success, and where The Panther is now surpassing all expectations.

My very first visit to a stud near Buenos Aires was to the Haras Nacional, not far from Palermo, but there was nothing very striking about that.

What is striking on all such occasions is the hospitality you meet with and the evidently genuine pleasure of people to see you. It is often complained that visitors to England are not so well received, and this is in a measure true, but it is not realised that England is the Hub of the Universe for racing, and those who congregate in this small island to see the Derby cannot hope to be so well catered for as those who spread from here to the circumference in various parts of the world, where there is no such congestion.

Palermo stands have been rebuilt since I was first there and are now the last thing in luxury. You can breakfast there admirably, and, having secured a comfortable seat, you can speculate on the various races without any trouble. There are liveried men to whom you can beckon and send them to purchase tickets on

your fancy. If it should win, your man will go and collect your money for you. I never but once made a bet there, but, being incited to do so, looked at the card and saw something by Flotsam had top weight. I knew absolutely nothing about the animal, but sent a man to buy me two tickets. It won all the way in a canter, at some sort of reasonable odds—I forget what.

This class of racing does not appeal to me at all. The people congregate and bet just as they would on "Little Horses" or any other game of chance. The racing goes on every Sunday from year end to year end, and the horses are trained close by. The wonder is that they retain any vitality and courage in such arduous monotony, which constitutes the real curse of the totalisator from a horse-breeding point of view. Palermo racing is as if there were a race-meeting in Hyde Park every Sunday afternoon, backed by the totalisator. This would pay the rates of London, but it would ruin the horses. It would, however, be infinitely preferable to the base uses to which the Park is put now by half-witted religionists and idiotic revolutionaries.

Senor Correas will remember consulting me at the Rutland Arms, Newmarket, before he bought Diamond Jubilee for 30,000 guineas. He asked me to tell him my opinion as a friend. I had nothing to do with the deal, and no great belief in Diamond Jubilee, but I advised him to close, feeling sure that he would get his money back over the first stock (which he did), and well knowing the prestige which the horse must carry with him as a winner of the triple crown, brother to Persimmon and the property of the King. All has gone happily since then with Diamond Jubilee, who

has several times headed the list of winning stallions, but I think he has never really done so well as was expected. The Panther, at the same stud, has already given more brilliant promise.

It would be idle I think for me to attempt to mention the many other good friends I have met in the Argentine. To arrive there at all in these days involves much formality. You require not only a passport, but also police magistrate certificates that you are neither a criminal nor a lunatic. Furthermore, you need a medical certificate that you have been vaccinated within the last seven years—otherwise the ship's doctor has to vaccinate you before you land. This is a splendid plan of campaign, against the anti-vaccinators, who are simply debarred from the country, and a good thing too, no such plea as conscientious objection being for one moment entertained.

Among trainers in the Argentine none is better remembered than Brett, who was a sterling good sort, though he got into trouble in England, through no fault of his own—as I believe. He came out at a time when there were not reciprocal arrangements between the jockey clubs on such questions, and to the end of his life he held a respected position in Buenos Aires, but the tales he used to pitch to the people out there about racing in England were marvellous indeed, and they took them all in so readily that when I met him he even told me some of his fairy stories, forgetting that I knew the facts. However, I never disturbed his happy belief in his fancies.

The trainer whom I really know best out there at the present time is Torterolo, who trains for Senor Unzue. He is well known also at Newmarket, where

Photograph: W. W. Rouch

GREY FOX (BY LE SAMARITAIN OUT OF DANCING FOX), THE ONLY HORSE WHO BEAT BOTAFOGO

he was for a year or two. His brother is the leading Argentine jockey, and it was in that stable I first saw Grey Fox, in the spring of 1920, when it immediately became obvious to me that this of all horses I had ever seen was the one to secure for the stud in our country.

Grey Fox was then in training, and subsequently won a good race, but all who have seen him in England, where he now is, agree that I spotted a gem that time, whatever mistakes I may have been guilty of on other occasions.

Now as to trips to Buenos Aires—the sea voyage is costly, beyond dispute, but there is no need when you get there to go to hotels such as the Plaza. The old Grand Hotel is good enough for anybody, and compares just as the Gordon Hotels do with the Ritz or Carlton. Moreover, the porter speaks English, and the whole place is quite homely. I have good reason to write this, for I have stayed there many times. I believe there was an occasion in the early days of the hotel when the late Mr W. Samson was the principal owner, and the cooks struck. Then it happened that my good friend, Mr James Getting, buckled to, with various associates, and did the cooking. How they did it goodness knows, but they kept the flag flying somehow or other and the strike soon ceased. I could write on *ad infinitum* about the Argentine, its cattle, its land, owned by leagues and not by acres, the beauties of the buildings of Buenos Aires, especially as you drive out to Palermo, but I must close down this subject, or fail to write about any other.

CHAPTER XV

AUSTRALASIA

The late Mr W. R. Wilson—Purchase of Bill of Portland—Immense Success — Importations to England — Merman and Aurum—Otterden, carrying Martian, goes to New Zealand—Mr G. G. Stead—Disappointments with Multiform and Noctuiform—Lady Meux and Survivor—Mr Edgar Cohen and Oban

I HAVE written so much in *The Sportsman* about Australasian blood stock that the subject may be dealt with more briefly now than its real importance warrants. My first real friend from Australia was the late Sir Samuel Wilson, of Ercildoune, who took Hughenden Manor and embarked on a political career in this country. His sons later on bought Trenton when the late Mr W. R. Wilson, of St Albans, Victoria, disposed of his stud by lottery and they sent the horse home to me, without so much as "by your leave." All the same they conferred a benefit on British blood stock which will have long-abiding consequences.

Mr W. R. Wilson, however, was my chief friend from Australia in those early days, about 1896 or 1897, and banks were breaking in Australia at that time. He wanted a St Simon stallion, but each day felt like spending less money, and eventually he limited himself to an outlay of 1000 guineas. Then he took my advice, which was to buy a really high-class horse with a "crab" about him, rather than a sound mediocrity, and I recommended Bill of Portland, who was worth

10,000 guineas, even in those days, had he been sound, but being a bad roarer he was bought for the 1000 guineas.

It is common knowledge now that Bill of Portland made an immense success at the stud in Australia from the very first, getting the best of the year in each of his first three seasons, and his sons have carried on successfully after him, more particularly Maltster; but this brilliant result was on the whole injurious to Australasian blood stock. Breeders there knew that Bill of Portland had been bought cheaply, and without assimilating my advice to Mr Wilson as to the *sine quâ non* of class, even if unsound, rather than sound mediocrities, they hastened to buy numbers of cheap stallions with specious pedigrees, regardless of whether they had ever shown any form or not. Thus they have contrived in the last twenty-five years to greatly depreciate their own stout old lines of blood, and to produce animals which are readily beaten by second-class importations from England.

It is on record that in the earlier times importations from Australia to England, such as Maluma, Merman, Mons Meg, The Grafter, Newhaven, Georgic, Australian Star and others, were more than equal to holding their own in this country, but none of them were by the cheap and flashy sires which the Bill of Portland fashion brought into vogue.

The mistake was in not understanding that Bill of Portland was really a horse of the highest class, and that as he did not transmit his infirmity to his stock his success was, or should have been, easy to understand; but it was not, and there was a rush from that time forth to buy cheap stallions, with most unfortunate results.

I did send out another really good St Simon stallion some few years later. This was Haut Brion, who was bought by Mr Samuel Hordern, father of the present Sir Samuel Hordern, and he did very well at the stud, but the bulk of the exports since those days have tended only to damage the Australasian stock, while we have benefited immensely by importing some of their very best horses, such as Trenton and Carbine.

The late Mr W. R. Wilson was a racing enthusiast. I have told many times how it was through him that I bought Merman to win the Cesarewitch for Mrs Langtry, which he did in the year of his arrival; but I have never told how it came about that Mrs Langtry bought Aurum, by far the best horse Mr Wilson ever owned.

It was during Merman's Cesarewitch week and I received a cable from Mr Wilson—"Guineas Aurum. Think Derby a certainty."

We were in the habit of using Bedford M'Neil's code, and there the word "Guineas" is stupidly given as a code word for "Am willing to negotiate." I interpreted the cable to mean that Mr Wilson would sell Aurum, whereas he was really only informing me that the colt had won the Caulfield Guineas—equivalent to our Two Thousand Guineas.

I showed Mrs Langtry the cable, and she was at once very keen to make a deal if possible, for Aurum was out and away the best of his year.

So then negotiations were opened, which soon disclosed the code mistake, but ultimately a bargain was made that Aurum should be bought for 5000 guineas, half down and half on shipment; to run out his few three-year-old engagements in Australia and Mrs Langtry to have half the stakes won.

£2500 was duly paid into Mr Wilson's bank in the city on the morning of the Victoria Derby, and then came up the result which I got in an evening paper while I was returning from Hurst Park—Amberite 1, Aurum 2! This was quite horrible, and when I reached home there was a cable from Wilson giving the result, and adding: "Aurum knocked on fence, cut fetlock; not his form."

I knew well that it was not his form, for he had given Amberite 14 lb. and run right away from him only three months earlier, but the cable read as if he might be seriously damaged.

Mrs Langtry took this disappointment like the good sportswoman she has always been—said she knew everyone had done his best for her, and hoped for better luck next time.

I was overjoyed to receive a cable on the following Monday: "Running Aurum in the Cup to-morrow. Think has good chance."

Obviously, then, the colt was all right, but he would be a wonder indeed if his chance was really good, for he was handicapped to carry 8 st. 6 lb., which is 14 lb. more than the standard weight given to a Derby winner in this race. Nevertheless, when the result came up, Aurum had run third close up with two old horses, Gaulus and The Grafter, to each of which he was giving close on a stone, and that as a young three-year-old—such as ours would be in March—over two miles. Properly considered, it was a greater performance even than Carbine's, for we saw over here what The Grafter's form was.

So far so good, but on the third day of the meeting Aurum came out and won the Flying Stakes, and on

the fourth day he won twice, finishing up with the C. B. Fisher Plate, two miles. Mrs Langtry had her half of the stakes cabled the following week, so all was well that ended well.

Later on Aurum won the Victoria St Leger before he was sent to England; but lack of attention to his feet put him in a bad way on the voyage, and Fred Webb, who had found Merman so easy to train, may have thought all colonial horses were alike.

Anyhow, galloping with Merman, who was then in training for another Cesarewitch, set up trouble, and later on, when the horses went to Foxhill, the late W. T. Robinson could never wind up Aurum, though he found out enough to assure me that this was by far the best horse he had ever had in his stable. His brother, Nat Robinson, who was then at his zenith, told me the same thing.

Such were the colonial horses of that period. Now you can send out a second-class animal from here and he carries all before him. It is because they have been breeding from cheap and nasty paper pedigrees, just because they are gaudy. Let them hold on to their old Musket, Fisherman, Yattendon, Tim Whiffler and Goldsbrough strains, and then they will find the importations not a serious menace.

I can safely claim that I was never responsible for sending to Australia or New Zealand any but good horses, and one of the latest of them was Kenilworth, with whom Mr E. R. White of Merton, New South Wales, did very well indeed.

When the late Mr G. G. Stead who was the leading owner in New Zealand, asked me some twenty years ago to send him out two or three nice young mares, Otterden

was one of them. She was of the Sunshine family and covered by Martagon, to whom she produced, in New Zealand, the great race-horse and stallion Martian, the most successful winning sire that has ever stood there. Mr Stead was a somewhat pompous gentleman, but a good sort when you got to know him.

Naturally the war played havoc with the business of exporting horses so far as Australasia, though we managed to get Night Hawk shipped as a special favour on one of the Government boats to Mr E. R. White. He landed safely at Sydney, and whatever may be thought of his class among St Leger winners, there is every reason to hope that he will make a really good stallion.

It must not be thought that all importations to England from the antipodes have been successful, and, curiously enough, I have had many disappointments from New Zealand, which is always considered more like England as regards climate than is Australia. Two of the best horses ever bred in New Zealand in comparatively recent times were Multiform and his son Noctuiform. Both belonged to G. G. Stead, who had no desire whatever to sell. The successes of Merman and others, however, had made the demand for such horses great, and I succeeded in buying Multiform for the present Lord D'Abernon for 5000 guineas, subject to his being allowed to run for two or three engagements in New Zealand, winning them and passing sound afterwards.

These conditions were fulfilled, and Multiform made the voyage by Cape Horn. It was a bad voyage and he suffered seriously from colic, insomuch that he was consigned to Mr E. H. Leach's veterinary establishment when he arrived at Newmarket.

Soon afterwards he went to Watson's stable, and after a few weeks' exercise it was found that he had gone wrong in his wind. He was a most beautiful horse, and such a catastrophe was sad indeed, but on my representation of the case Mr Stead agreed to take his old favourite back and to send Sir Edgar Vincent Screw Gun instead. This also was quite a good horse and won a One Thousand Sovereigns race for his new owner, thus terminating the incident amicably, if not profitably, for Sir Edgar.

Multiform on return to New Zealand became one of the most successful stallions out there, and his son Noctuiform not only carried all before him in the island, but also went over to Sydney and won the A.J.C. Derby in record time. It was then that I again tried Mr Stead if he would sell, for Sir James Buchanan was a buyer. He did not want to sell, except at 5000 guineas, and with permission to run three races in New Zealand. Again the bargain was made, subject to the colt winning them easily and passing sound afterwards.

All this happened, and Noctuiform landed in this country in splendid shape. He never won a race, but I blame neither the horse for that nor New Zealand.

Noctuiform's failure, however, effectually stopped the demand from here for Australasian horses. All the same, who ever saw the Grand National won in better style than by Moifaa?

I am not saying that failures—in a sense—did not come also from Australia. There was Survivor, a good winner out there, who was being brought home by the late Mr W. T. Jones, and I had an option on him at 2000 guineas. This son of Lochiel had an excellent

record and Lady Meux agreed to buy him if Mr Williams passed him sound. The horse was located in the late James Waugh's stable. Mr Williams will remember how he and I and Lady Meux and a little dog went down by train to Newmarket with a luncheon basket and a bottle of champagne. The dog took a fit and buzzed about like a catherine wheel, but as Mr Williams was a vēt, I left it to him, and I must say he was equal to the occasion.

Survivor was passed sound, and he was run within a few weeks of that time for the Cesarewitch, finishing so prominently at the Bushes that he was noted as good for the Cambridgeshire; but that Cesarewitch effort had overdone him. He was no great stayer, and he never regained his form until he ran second to Newhaven for the City and Suburban the following year.

There is no doubt that Survivor was a good horse, but at that time Merman had made our trainers think that all colonial horses were stayers, and capable of any amount of work.

There was a much more mysterious horse that I brought over from Australia, and that was Oban. He had a first-rate record and won his last race just before starting for England. Mrs Langtry was the buyer, but she transferred the purchase to Mr Edgar Cohen, and when Oban went to Foxhill on his arrival, Robinson was delighted with him after a very few weeks. He was a gelding by the great Prince Charlie horse, Lochiel, and ultimately, after being entered in the Cambridgeshire, showed them such a trial that the race was regarded as a bed-rock certainty. When the card was called over at the Newmarket subscription rooms

the night before the Cambridgeshire Mr Cohen sat there and took £4000 to £1000 about Oban as often as hecould get it, and that was a considerable number of times. Next afternoon, in the paddock, I was introduced to Mrs Cohen, as having been instrumental in importing the favourite, and made a feeble attempt to hedge by saying that racing was more or less of a lottery—or words to that effect. In the actual race Oban never made a show; but for some mysterious reason he would not race on the flat here. He later on showed really brilliant form over hurdles in France, and was no doubt as good as ever he was.

CHAPTER XVI

BREEDING, A LOTTERY?

Lucky Purchase of Qeeen Mary—Sir Daniel Cooper's Enforced Luck—Sanda's Worthless Foal—Rosaline—Cheapness no Merit—But do not despise Cheapness—Money does not make Money—Ring-side Maxims—Valuation of Blood Stock impossible—Leave Nothing to Chance—Make all possible Inquiries—Foreign Buyers at a Disadvantage—Sir Tatton and La Flêche—Purchase of Sceptre—La Flêche as a Yearling—Sierra

THE above headline is very far from a truism, though the element of luck has a great deal to do with success in breeding and racing. Old-time instances in proof of this can easily be recalled —*e.g.* the late Mr William I'Anson's purchase of Queen Mary for 100 guineas; but few people are aware how the late Sir Daniel Cooper had greatness as a breeder thrust on him. He had a thorough knowledge of blood stock when he came to this country, and, in fact, had those good three-year-old fillies, Mons Meg, Dorcas and Melody, in training as three-year-olds, with Mathew Dawson in 1891, and later with George Blackwell; but he was not after buying brood mares at that time. His brother, the present Sir William Cooper, happened to ask Sir Daniel to pick him up a likely mare or two if he came across any such; and in due course Sir Daniel bought Footlight (by Cremorne out of Paraffin) and Satire (by Blair Athol out of Jocosa) for quite small prices—so small, indeed, that his brother thought they must be rubbish and refused to have anything

to do with them. So Sir Daniel Cooper kept them himself, and Footlight, through her daughter Glare—not to mention Float—became the source of one of the most successful modern families, while Satire produced Juvenal (by Springfield) and other good winners. Juvenal, by the way, was bought by the late Colonel W. P. Thompson of the Brookdale Stud, U.S.A., and became a successful stallion, siring, among other great winners, Chacornac, who won the Futurity Stakes, and later on was trained at Beckhampton and won the Snailwell Stakes, Newmarket, and other races. The prices realised by Flair, Lesbia and Menda, all daughters of Glare, are well remembered, and the family is still progressing.

Another curious case is that Sanda's last foal, born in 1897, was so small, and showed so little promise of reasonable growth, that he was given away and the old mare destroyed the following year. Sir James Miller, who owned Sanda, would not have it that the colt could be of any use at all, but George Blackwell formed a different opinion, and in due time this despised son of Melanion became a great race-horse, and not only won a Cesarewitch, but beat William the Third for the Jockey Club Cup.

Rosaline (by Trenton out of Rosalys) was bred by Mr J. B. Joel, and as a two-year-old was so small that her breeder, on the advice of Charles Morton, gave her away to the Fresh Air Fund. She was sold by auction together with a mob of other cast-offs at Hurst Park, and I bought the little daughter of Trenton for 25 guineas—the top price, I think it was.

Rosaline grew fully two inches in the following year, and I passed her on for 200 guineas to the late Mr J. A.

Doyle. She was then in foal to Collar. Doyle bred a winner out of her by Orme, and the following year mated her with St Frusquin, to whom she produced Rosedrop, winner of the Oaks and dam of Gainsborough, who fills at a 400 guineas' fee.

Rosedrop, so far from taking after her dam in being on the small side, errs if anything in bulk and magnitude. She was a great mare on the turf, and beat Willonyx fairly and squarely over one and a half miles at York, with the weights 6 lb. in his favour.

It would perhaps be irksome to pursue this subject of mares cheaply bought and great stock resulting, but I may just mention Lowland Aggie, bought at the December sales, Newmarket, for 35 guineas, and two years later developing into the dam of Lomond, who was certainly the best colt of his year, though he went amiss as a three-year-old and could never run up to his form at that age. He showed at Ascot the following year that he had retained his form, and later on he has become a very successful sire.

Now all such records as these are very tempting to small men, who think they see in them a royal road to riches. Blue Tit cost only 300 guineas, and her last yearlings have made 11,500, 14,500, and 7700 guineas respectively. It may happen indeed that a man with no knowledge of breeding or blood stock will pick up a little gold mine in the shape of a brood mare for a trifling sum. To such men the game is a lottery indeed, but people of large experience, unless they are constrained by lack of capital, will not lay themselves out to secure cheap bargains. If what you know to be good is going cheap, buy her by all means, but not because she is cheap.

On the other hand, it is the greatest mistake of all to despise a mare because you have bought her cheaply. Most people are affected by this feeling more or less, and even I must admit an unreasonable prejudice against Lomond because I bought his dam for 35 guineas, but this is absurd, as I well know. In other countries the prejudice against cheaply bought mares is carried much further. For example, when, in 1919, I had to buy four or five mares for The Panther up to 5000 guineas, I secured four according to the best of my ability for 4900 guineas, and then, seeing a very nice young Symington mare, dam by Baliol, grandam by Trenton, hanging fire in the ring, I got her for 100 guineas, and exactly made up the amount of the commission. But the idea of a 100-guineas mare for The Panther was anathema maranatha at Buenos Aires, and I cheerfully kept her myself. She was in foal to the anything but fashionable Bonfire, to whom she produced an excellent foal last year, which alone paid for the purchase. This year she had a beautiful filly by Sundridge, and of course went to big value.

Mere money does not make money in buying blood stock, as poor Kennedy Jones, Lord Wilton and many others have found to their cost, but if money is spent with well-balanced judgment by people who understand their job—whether launching out or buying cheap—the average result is sure to be good. The worst fault of all is to be prejudiced against anything because it is cheap, especially if you are present at the ring-side and have previously inspected the animals. So many people hesitate to trust their own judgment on such occasions, and think because no one else is bidding there must be something wrong.

It is not so difficult to estimate the absolutely top-class lots. Thus when Mr Goculdas cabled me in December 1920 to recommend him the four best mares coming up at the sales, and my idea of value, I recommended Sourabaya, Monisima, Snow Marten and Salamandra, at 5000 guineas each. I was instructed to buy them at those prices, and got the first three for 15,200 guineas, but such are the eccentricities of sales that Salamandra realised 16,000 guineas, and, honestly speaking, I would sooner have any one of the other three.

Of course when you are among mares of this class there is no such thing as buying them cheaply, but the point is that many a good mare, with less immediate pretensions, has been bought cheaply, and people in other parts of the world won't look at them unless at a large price. Senor Ignacio Correas, who, through Mr Casares, gave 970 guineas for Rosaline at the December sales, was horrified the following spring when he found that I had originally bought her for 25 guineas, but as her daughter Rosedrop won the Oaks that year the mare was by that time worth more like 5000 guineas.

Valuation of blood stock is impossible.

Years ago I bought Lady Sterling, by Silver, for 10 guineas, and from that inauspicious beginning she proceeded to prove herself an extraordinarily successful brood mare, producing nine winners out of ten foals, and some of them were of good class. The fillies out of her did equally well as matrons; notably Cooee (dam of Last Call, Cooya, Bill and Coo, Call o' the Wild, etc.) and Queen Gold (dam of Gera and other good ones).

On the other hand, that grand mare Flair, who,

with her colt foal, was sold for 16,000 guineas, never produced anything at all worthy of herself.

I don't think the best judge in the world could have faulted Flair when she made that price, though he might naturally have said it was too much to give for any brood mare. Her failure must always remain a mystery, except that she was a shy breeder in the later years of her life. Her sister Lesbia (dam of Torchlight, Moonfleet, Passer, Damaris, Stratford and other winners) is very good individually, but by no means the equal of Flair. Such as she is, however, the late Sir John Thursby gave 9000 guineas for her, and even at that price she may be regarded as having been a bargain, and she may still have two or three more profitable seasons to come.

The one sovereign rule in buying brood mares at an auction sale is to leave nothing to chance. This necessitates a lot of spade-work and judicious inquiries of stud grooms. You may have to buy, say, half-a-dozen at a certain average for a certain horse, and you will probably find about thirty lots in a December sales catalogue that are likely, on the face of it, to suit you.

Then comes the task of inspecting the whole lot and inquiring about them in every detail. Practically all stud grooms will tell you the truth—though with natural bias in favour of the seller. I never met with but one who told me a deliberate untruth, and that was nearly thirty years ago. The mare was a very good one indeed, and had all the appearance of being certain in foal—so much so that I hardly troubled to inquire, but this man vouchsafed the assurance that there was no possible doubt on the subject.

I bid up to 2000 guineas for this mare on behalf of the late James R. Keene, and, having made my own limit, let her go to the next bidder at 2100 guineas.

The mare, as it shortly afterwards transpired, had slipped foal two or three weeks before the sale.

Mr Tattersall will remember the occasion, for the mare was bought as one of the mates of Ormonde.

However, the question was very properly raised that there had been a latent error in the catalogue's description, and after arbitration, over which I think Mr James Lowther presided, the sale was cancelled.

I mention this one exceptional case as proving the rule. Reputable stud grooms do not have the instincts of horse-copers about them, and they or their employers will tell you the truth—it may be sugared over, but you will ascertain all you want to know.

That is where foreign buyers are at a disadvantage when they come over here in search of bargains, and cannot gain intimate knowledge, but simply buy as the fancy moves them. I should look well trying to buy in France in similar circumstances; but this is just what poor Cheri Halbronn tried to do in his later years at Newmarket, with the result that, good judge as he undoubtedly was, he made many bad bargains, which I or anyone with close knowledge would have warned him against.

There are mares for which, within reason, it is impossible to give too much, and La Flêche was one of them. The late Sir Tatton Sykes had the chance of buying her and her first foal privately for 10,000 guineas, but refused to do so, and in the summer of that year the mare came up at the Newmarket sales. The late Lady Sykes instructed Lord Marcus Beresford to

buy her, and he did so in all good faith, but he had to bid 12,600 guineas for the mare alone. The result was that the good old gentleman at first repudiated the transaction, and went away to France to avoid being worried about it; but wiser counsels prevailed, and he accepted the position, nor had he ever any reason to regret the purchase, though the best of her stock, such as John o' Gaunt and Baroness La Flêche, had bad luck on the turf. From both of these classic winners have already descended, with every prospect of more to follow.

Sceptre even at 10,000 guineas as a yearling was well worth the money. The late Duke of Westminster never failed to breed more than half the Eaton stock up to high-class weight-for-age form, and there was not much of a lottery in buying his yearlings, at whatever price—especially a daughter of Ornament, sister to Ormonde. Sceptre more than trebled her purchase price in stakes alone as a two and three year old, and then, when she failed for her second Lincoln Handicap as a four-year-old, Mr Sievier, who had not been having a good time, asked me to sell her, naming 24,000 guineas as the price.

Immediately on return from racing that day I wrote to Mr Arthur Chetwynd asking him to transmit this offer to Sir W. Bass, who was then in India, for it seemed to me that a better nucleus for a first-class stud could never be found.

The following afternoon I went on from Lincoln to Liverpool, and that evening in the billiard-room of the Adelphi Hotel Mr Chetwynd arrived, who told me he had just been fixing up the purchase of Sceptre for £25,000, which, of course, is but £200 less than 24,000

guineas. However, I was out of it and did not murmur.

Sceptre continued to win great races, and she has already established a great family, through her daughter, Maid of the Mist, and others of her daughters have still to be represented.

No mistake can be made in buying such a mare, provided she has sound constitution and ordinary health, for insurance rates are nowadays much lower than they used to be.

There is a certain amount of interest in referring to what one wrote of famous animals before they achieved fame.

I quote from what I wrote for *St Stephen's Review*, published 21st June 1890:

"Reference to *St Stephen's Review* in 1889 will show that I declared Her Majesty's yearlings to be the worst lot I had ever seen—having regard to their pretensions. I said it before the sale and I said it afterwards, despite the high average they made. The buyers will, in almost every instance, admit now that I was right. Where is there a winning two-year-old from that lot? So far as I know, there is not one. But this year matters are vastly different; nor is it a mere question of fashion. Nothing more astounding has ever been done than for one stud to produce and sell on the same afternoon the winners of Derby and Oaks, and also the second in the Grand Prix; and when we find own sisters to Derby and Oaks winners, and half-brother to the second in the Grand Prix, we may be sure, without seeing them, that there will be tall bidding; but, apart wholly from that, Her Majesty's

yearlings are this time exceptionally good, and it will be a record sale, unless I am much mistaken.

. . . . . .

"Well, now, everyone wants to know about the sisters to Memoir and Sainfoin.

"The sister to Sainfoin is remarkably like her brother, being the same dark colour of chestnut—rather darker if anything—and taking altogether after St Albans in this respect. She is the same low, lengthy animal as Sainfoin, except only her head and neck, and there she comes out exactly what you might imagine two Stockwell crosses and one Rataplan would create, whereas Sainfoin has preserved his sire's quality in these points. Now I have never seen a first-class filly whose head and neck were decidedly short of quality. Others will form their own opinion; I have sufficiently indicated mine.

"As to the sister to Memoir, *I can only say that had I 4000 guineas handy I would gladly disburse them now and take my chance of a profit on the sale day.* This is as grand a filly as a man can imagine. Had her sister not won the Oaks, were she an unfashionably bred one altogether, still she would, of necessity, make a very big price. As it is, there is no knowing what she may fetch. A magnificent filly in every respect, she stands fifteen hands now, and is positively an improvement on Memoir. *Let anyone who wants to make a fancy bet risk whatever he likes on this being the highest priced one ever sold in England.*"

The above is what I wrote about Sierra (dam of Sundridge and Amphora) and La Flêche when they were yearlings at Hampton Court about a fortnight before the annual sale. There was nobody present

when I saw them, except good old Mackrell, the stud groom. As to La Flêche, the forecast was correct in every detail. Sierra was bought for 1000 guineas by the Prince of Wales, but she had some latent defect in one of her nostrils, and he returned her. She was never trained, but is certainly immortalised as the dam of Sundridge.

CHAPTER XVII

CLASSIC WINNERS

Record since 1863—General Improvement—Great Individuals in the Past—Occasional Bad Ones in the Present—Blair Athol and Robert Peck—Gladiateur and Rev. Cecil Legard—All the Winners—Prince Charlie magnificent—Cremorne and Lord Rosebery—Doncaster—Bend Or—Ormonde—Galopin, Kisber, Silvio—Defeats of Galliard and Bruce—Iroquois and Foxhall—St Gatien and St Simon

I SUPPOSE there are not many people who have seen more classic winners than I have, and the question often crops up—Which was the best of them? It is a question which no human being can answer definitely unless he lacks a judicial mind—for how, indeed, is it possible to compare the form throughout more than fifty years? That the form of our horses has been improving throughout that time I know, though I am quite sure that a Derby winner like Macaroni was immeasurably superior to such as Durbar, Tagalie or Aboyeur, who as Derby winners were mere freaks.

It is a different matter when we try to compare the best of years that have passed, and I make no doubt Macaroni was a good horse, though not a wonder. His forelegs were proppy and light of bone, and he transmitted that defect to many of his descendants, but he was a good stud horse, and has always proved valuable in the making of brood mares, such as Lily Agnes and her sister, Tiger Lily. Macaroni stood little over 15·2, and in his latter stages was wrong in his wind. I

always preferred to him his very close relative, Carnival, who had infinitely better forelegs, and was better looking all round, but having been sent abroad for some years, never had a fair chance of success when he came back to this country, where, nevertheless, he sired Mask, Scobell and other good winners, as also Festive, the dam of L'Abbesse de Jouarre.

I knew both Macaroni and Carnival well, for we had them as stallions at Cobham; but Blair Athol I knew from his youth up, as he was bred and trained near to my home in Yorkshire, and everyone there went more or less mad about him, for was he not a son of Stockwell and Blink Bonny (also bred and trained at Malton), who won the Derby and Oaks?

Moreover, Blair Athol was a wonder from the day when he was foaled. The late Robert Peck, who was then located at Malton, told me several times that he never saw such a foal as Blair Athol, and, what is more, the colt never looked back at any of his younger stages, though he was a bit weak in the knees. The marvel of it all was that Blair Athol was known to be good enough to back for the Derby in a field of thirty, that being his first race, and he won easily enough. I knew Blair Athol well to the end of his life, and have never seen a more beautiful horse. Most people nowadays think he had a lot of white about his legs, but he had only a near hind fetlock white, and a blaze face. I have never seen a good portrait of him.

A year later there was some sort of a bogus match made up to show Blair Athol and Gladiateur against one another, and they were both on view at Doncaster; but such a match was absurd, for Gladiateur was a horse of wholly different type, more suitable for Aintree

jumping, whereas Blair Athol had immeasurably more racing quality, though goodness knows what he too might have done had he been put to jumping.

The suggested match has been of perennial interest, for I remember that only a few short years ago that dear, good man and best of sportsmen, the Rev. Cecil Legard, wrote me that he and a hunting friend had decided in favour of Gladiateur.

On the merits of Gladiateur there can be no doubt —his handicap performances showed that; but after his year classic form was not wonderful—Lord Lyon, Hermit, Blue Gown and Pretender were followed by Kingcraft as Derby winners, and though the last-named was about the best-looking Derby winner I have seen, he was certainly a bad one according to classic standard.

Lord Lyon, of course, became the sire of Minting, an immeasurably better horse than himself, and Hermit developed into a much greater stallion than he ever was a race-horse; but Blue Gown, whom we had at Cobham for two or three years before he was sold to Mr James R. Keene, and died in mid-Atlantic, was one of the very worst stallions ever known in England, though strangely enough he had made quite a success in Germany.

Pretender went wrong in his wind and did no good; but Favonius was a really fine horse, and it is wonderful that with him and the succeeding Derby winner, Cremorne—great horses both—the Sweetmeat line of Gladiator, through Parmesan, did not go from strength to strength; but experience proves that nature defeats all the most clever schemes of breeding, and, to the best of my belief, there is not a single male descendant of

either Favonius or Cremorne in the *Stud Book* at the present day.

It was Favonius whose success, combined with Hannah's and Corisande's in 1871, led to the memorable watchword: "Follow the Baron!" (next year). This was based on the form shown by Laburnum against Prince Charlie (then two-year-olds), but it was a sadly mistaken estimate, for Prince Charlie beat even Cremorne for the Two Thousand Guineas of 1872, and I honestly think would have beaten any horse I ever saw over that course.

He was a magnificent individual, with immense size, power and bone, and faulty only that he was not very deep in his girth. I can only repeat I have never seen such a horse and don't suppose I shall do so again. He was by far the best son of Blair Athol, and it is a thousand pities that he never had a stud chance to speak of in this country. During two or three seasons in America he went right to the top of the tree, with Salvator and others, and his son Lochiel did the same in Australasia.

There can, I think, be no doubt that Cremorne was a very great horse indeed, not merely because he won the Derby in Prince Charlie's year, but for the way in which he won the Ascot Cup the year afterwards. I well remember seeing him win; not altogether an attractive horse, with something of a hammer head on a longish, light neck, but a rare-made one otherwise, and there was no mistake about the way he strung out his field. I believe that Lord Rosebery to this day thinks Cremorne about the best horse he ever saw, and he may be right, but somehow neither Cremorne nor Favonius proved capable of perpetuating the Sweetmeat line,

which had come to the front a few years earlier through Macaroni.

In 1873 Doncaster was not a great Derby winner by any means, though equal to the task of beating Gang Forward and Kaiser; but he had been so reared at Sledmere in those days that he gained the unenviable reputation of being the fattest yearling ever sent into a sale ring. It was a hopeless task to train him as a two-year-old, and Robert Peck told me that he himself beat the colt easily over three furlongs on an old hunting mare, Doncaster being ridden by a light boy. There came a change, however, the following year, though not until Derby Day, and even then Doncaster was not nearly at his best. He never reached his zenith till he was five years old, when he won the Ascot Cup and Alexandra Plate in grand style, and proved himself to be a worthy perpetuator of the great Stockwell line. Martin Gurry, who knew Doncaster and his son, Bend Or, well, has told me that there was an immense difference between the two, the sire being a very robust staying horse, while the son was altogether more delicate and by no means such a stayer, but through these two the Stockwell line has, so far, been most strongly organised.

George Frederick, who succeeded Doncaster as a Derby winner, was a bull-fronted horse, a good one on Derby Day no doubt, but he cannot have been one of the elect—indeed I question if his elder brother, Albert Victor, was not better. Nevertheless it is impossible to overlook the great success of Princess of Wales, the dam of these horses, when mated with Marsyas. She produced five foals in succession by Marsyas, and they were Albert Victor, Louise Victoria, Victoria Alexandra,

George Frederick and Maud Victoria. Then came a filly by Lord Clifden, and afterwards Albert Edward and George Albert, both by Marsyas. Thus there were seven in all by Marsyas, and all showed some form, while Albert Victor, George Frederick and Louise Victoria were in high weight-for-age class; but Marsyas was a bad-tempered old beast, and his son, George Frederick, was for three months or more practically unmanageable when he started stud life at Cobham. He never did much good, and Albert Victor was not very much more successful.

Galopin, the 1875 Derby winner, may have been one of the very best, though there was hardly enough of him to justify this belief, and his racing career was cut too short to admit of a complete demonstration of merit. He was a beautifully shaped blood horse of medium size, without any sign of bulk or lumber, and the most notable characteristic of him was his extreme nervous excitability. I saw him first when he was brought down to the paddock on the Two Thousand Guineas day, just to show him the crowd, and he was then in a black sweat and lather all over. It was that highest form of nervous tension which, unless ill-regulated, may give great results—as it certainly did in Galopin's case, for he was much more soberly disposed on the Derby Day, and won his race, though he was all out to beat Claremont, they being right clear of the rest of the field. Galopin initiated an epoch in blood-stock breeding which will never cease to be of the highest importance. There is no need to regret that he did not run after his second brief season.

The next Derby winner, Kisber, was a squarely

built, sturdy horse, and beyond doubt a very good one, but his year was an unhappy one, and between him and Petrarch there was a mix-up. Kisber did well as a stallion in his native country, Hungary, and in England, before his departure, he sired Kinsky, winner of the Chester Cup; but as Kinsky was out of Illuminata, who later on produced Ladas, Gas (dam of Cicero) and Chelandry, there seems to be no great reason to give Kisber any special credit for Kinsky.

Silvio, the 1877 Derby winner, was a really good horse, and a perfect type of the best sort that Blair Athol used to get from Kingston mares. He was tried before the Craven Meeting to be as good as the four-year-old Skylark at even weights, and though Lord Falmouth thought Chamant might beat him, this fear did not materialise after the Two Thousand Guineas, for Silvio won the Derby right enough, and also the Leger. He may not have been quite a great horse, but he was a very good one, and he was sacrificed in two succeeding years to leading Jannette and then Wheel of Fortune in their work. He stayed the Cesarewitch course all right and beat Verneuil over it. Moreover, when he went to France he headed the list of winning stallions as the result of his first season there.

Sefton and Sir Bevys, who came next in order, were beneath contempt as Derby winners, though the latter gave Fordham his first and only winning mount for that race, and was by Favonius out of Lady Langden (dam of Hampton). I used to think that Sir Bevys would make a good stallion, and, failing him, that his son Morglay, a much better-looking horse, would; but it was not to be.

A better winner was found in 1880, and this was Bend Or, of, I suppose, imperishable memory; and he certainly won, though that he was extraordinarily lucky to beat Robert the Devil no one can dispute. That, however, does not matter. Bend Or, like Hermit, became a much greater stallion than ever he was a race-horse, and he continued the Doncaster line of Stockwell in magnificent style. He was not a great Derby winner, but he attained to greatness.

Great horse or not, I shall never forget his race for the Derby, which I, being active, witnessed from the start, and all the way round the furzes—then ran to the spur of the hill and saw all the rest, except the last fifty yards. Robert the Devil, viewed from where I could see them, was like a hare followed by terriers, going away with great stotting bounds just as he was minded, and when in that last fifty yards they passed out of sight it was impossible to imagine that anything else could win. There was just a momentary vision of Fred Archer making an effort—but what could he do? The numbers went up and he had achieved the apparently impossible: Bend Or had won. There can, however, be no doubt that Robert the Devil was the better race-horse—very much better over a longer course.

Iroquois, the champion of 1881, was a hard, wiry beast, and a good one too, or he could not have stood the work which Jacob Pincus gave him; but he was not a patch on Foxhall, his American compatriot, who won the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire that year. But Foxhall himself was really no wonder, as was shown at Ascot the following year. Iroquois returned to America and made little mark as a stallion. Lord Rosebery

secured Foxhall as a stallion in England and had good reason to regret it.

Shotover, the Derby winner of 1882, was a fine, substantial, lengthy chestnut filly, but very far from a good one—inferior indeed to her stable companion, Geheimniss, who was little better than a brilliant sprinter. The good horse of this year was Bruce, who was alleged to have shied at a piece of paper when running for the Derby, and afterwards won the Grand Prix. He was ridden by "Thammy" Mordan in the Derby.

There were two or three good colts in 1883, but St Blaise, the Derby winner, was not one of them. I allude to Macheath, Beau Brummel and Galliard, of whom the last-named should certainly have won the Derby, though he was inferior to Beau Brummel, in the same stable. Beau Brummel, however, was infirm and not wound up on Derby Day. It is futile to go back on old scandals, but there is practically no doubt that Galliard's defeat caused his owner, Lord Falmouth, to sell off his blood stock. St Blaise was anything but a high-class Derby winner, but he attained fame in the U.S.A., where he was sold for 100,000 dollars, a very big price in those days.

We saw better horses in 1884, though how Harvester made a dead heat with St Gatien for the Derby is a mystery, as also why Mr Hammond, St Gatien's owner, agreed to divide. St Simon was in that year, and no one ever knew the limit of his racing merit. On the Derby form, as measured through Harvester, he was vastly superior to St Gatien, but it is almost absurd to take St Gatien's Derby form as correct, and the fact remains that he won the Cesarewitch in a canter by four lengths,

carrying 8 st. 10 lb. Would St Simon have beaten him at even weights that day? No one can tell; but it remains on record that St Gatien was tried over the Cambridgeshire course to be 14 lb. (and an easy beating) better than his four-year-old stable companion, Florence, and she won the Cambridgeshire with 9 st. 1 lb. in the saddle. St Gatien was a horse of great scope and power, a trifle slack behind the withers, but a right good one over any distance. He suffered badly from Newmarket fever at the end of his three-year-old season, and, though he won the Ascot Cup and Alexandra Plate as a four-year-old, was never quite the horse he was on his Cesarewitch day. Nevertheless he was fully equal to the task of winning the Jockey Club Cup in three successive years, on the last of which he strung out Melton in the most smashing style.

Melton, who won the '85 Derby, was a beautiful bay colt with perfect symmetry and quality, but, as regards stamina, just such another as Bend Or. Like Bend Or, too, he owed his Derby victory to Fred Archer, for he most certainly should not have beaten Paradox, on whom Fred Webb threw the race away. The circumstances of that race are best buried in oblivion.

Melton had no great success as a stallion in England until he had been sold to Italy, when he stood some few years. He was bought back again by Mr Musker, and at first did wonders, but his owner did not continue breeding on the same lines and the wonders ceased.

CHAPTER XVIII

CLASSIC WINNERS CONTINUED

A Classic Constellation—George Thompson and Minting—Ormonde, Minting, Saraband and The Bard — American Possibilities—Hanover, good—Concerning Surefoot—Why did he not win the Derby?—Sainfoin greater by sequence—Sir Hugo not great, but lives in Australia—Isinglass for ever!—Ladas must survive

THE year 1886 was one of the best ever known as regards classic three-year-olds, for Ormonde, The Bard, Minting and Saraband were all good enough to win a Derby, and there was Breadknife almost equally good. They were of strangely different types: Ormonde a big, commanding bay, of heavy, almost lumbering substance, but framed on the best of lines; Minting even bigger and more bulky, with shoulders almost suggestive of harness, and fore-joints none of the best, with a tendency to hairy heels. Poor little George Thompson, who rode him in his first smart gallop as a yearling, told his owner, Mr Robert Vyner: "You need not trouble to put this beast in training."

Yet Minting was really one of the horses of the century, and, though he could not beat Ormonde, was well able to win the Grand Prix. The Bard, as a *multum in parvo*, was a marvel. He was a silver-shot, muscular chestnut, moulded to perfection, and I stood on the spur of the hill at Epsom watching him hunt Ormonde home for the Derby—quite vainly, but with unflagging courage. Saraband showed the best quality

of any of the four, and he was of almost equally high class. A chestnut son of Muncaster and Highland Fling, he was entirely blood-like, and his only fault was that he ran up rather light behind the saddle. They were great horses all, and Ormonde, as judged from his first year at the stud, would have been a phenomenal stallion had he not been incapacitated by septic pneumonia in his second. It was farcical then to say that he was sold "for his country's good" on account of wind infirmity.

As a Derby horse Merry Hampton, the 1887 winner, was unworthy of notice, and The Baron, whom he beat, was, though a finer individual, a poor creature with no heart in him. If the American Hanover had been in the Derby that year he would have walked in.

We saw something better in 1888, when Ayrshire, another son of Hampton, won, but he was anything but a nonesuch among Derby winners. He was, however, a genuinely good one, modelled on true lines, and with the Feronia tap-root; he has been very valuable as a sire, especially of brood mares.

In 1889 came Donovan, who, though the second best son of Galopin, was more or less of a freak. Winner of the Brocklesby Stakes, he at that time was typical of a rough-and-ready pony, with a superabundant mane. But he kept on winning and improving.

He went wrong in his wind before the St Leger, as Mathew Dawson informed me, though his nephew George would say nothing on the subject, he being the trainer. Anyhow Donovan made good, and should have been a "triple-crowner," but he was not really great.

In 1890 came Sainfoin as a Derby winner, and a poor one at that; destined, however, to be the

progenitor of immeasurably greater horses. Surefoot and St Serf were the best of that year, and St Serf was withdrawn from the Derby for fear of Surefoot, who in his turn was "taken care of" by several jockeys who rode in the race. This is beyond all question, and the late W. T. Robinson, who had the mount on Rathbeal, never in his later days made any secret of it. "I give you my word," he used to say, "Surefoot had not any b——y earthly!"

Liddiard, who rode Surefoot, had been instrumental in getting several of them "stood down" for a month some time before, and on the Derby Day one of them "filled Liddiard up with gin"—of which he was all too fond—and the rest saw to it in the race that Surefoot should not win. This is no mere vamped-up story emanating from a disappointed backer, but what W. T. Robinson himself told me, and others again and again.

However, the Derby found the best stud horse that year, for Sainfoin became the sire of Rock Sand.

In 1891 there was Common, a great, lathy, sinewy colt, who should have been given at least another year on the turf. No horse ever won the Derby more easily, and he trained stale after an arduous season, so that he struggled home for the St Leger with some difficulty. I think he was better than John Porter, in his last book, gave him credit for, had he been given further time to mature, but Sir Blundell Maple, who bought him after the St Leger, never allowed him to run again. Good and well-bred as he was, Common was a failure at the stud, though he sired Nun Nicer, Mushroom and a few other good ones.

Sir Hugo, the Derby winner of 1892, was a con-

spicuously fine colt, of great power and substance, though rather faulty in his hocks. He was noted on the Two Thousand Guineas day as a possible Derby winner, and he won, but he should never have beaten La Flêche, as she proved conclusively in the St Leger, when Orme should have beaten her; but it is needless to go into that story. Sir Hugo has good descendants in Australia.

In 1893 came Isinglass, an undeniably great horse, judged by any standard, but I am unable to clear myself of a prejudice against him, because in all his races there used to be a cry of "The favourite's beat!" and then he was flogged home by Tommy Loates to win. I recognise that such prejudice was unreasonable, and due to a sluggish temperament of the horse and the short legs of the jockey, but it is well-nigh impossible to rid yourself of these first impressions. Be that as it may, Isinglass ranks with the very best of all time, and through his son, John o' Gaunt (sire of Swynford), he established a line that is going from strength to strength.

Ladas, the 1894 winner, was much more after my own heart—one who would run it out to the uttermost without being asked; all blood, nerve and quality. He was a quite delightful horse, and how it happened that he became savage in his later years is to me, at any rate, beyond comprehension. Mathew Dawson would have dearly liked to match him against Isinglass across the flat, and, each being fit and well, I feel sure that Ladas would have won.

Sir Visto, the following year, was pretty good, or he could not have won Derby and Leger, but he was not within 14 lb. of what Ladas (trained in the same stable)

had been. From him, however, we passed on to something vastly better in 1896.

This was Persimmon, whose only fault was that he needed a terrible amount of work to get him fit, and, like his daughter, Sceptre, he was thick-winded until he got it. He made a quite considerable noise when he was finishing third for the Middle Park Plate, and at the Newmarket Craven Meeting the following spring he performed so ingloriously in a rough gallop with two Platers that he was forthwith struck out of the Two Thousand Guineas. All the same, after a course of strenuous work he won the Derby by a narrow margin from St Frusquin. It was a great event indeed, and the scene when the Prince of Wales led him in will never be forgotten by those who were present. Persimmon's true greatness was not proved until his Ascot Cup victory the following year. That was a really magnificent performance, and the horse was individually a grand one, if with a slight tendency to lumber. There was little to choose between him and St Frusquin as three-year-olds, but Persimmon's four-year-old season entitled him to the supremacy.

In 1897 Galtee More carried all before him, and this was another Derby winner of the highest class. From the moment I saw him as a two-year-old at Goodwood I made up my mind that he would surely beat Velasquez, who was then the favourite two-year-old. Galtee More was out by himself the best of his year, and but for being rather high from the hocks to the ground he was almost faultless in conformation. He ran an exceptionally great race for the Cambridgeshire at the end of a very hard season.

Jeddah, the 1898 Derby winner, cannot be considered

great, though he was very far from one of the worst Derby winners, or he would not have carried the penalty and won the Prince of Wales Stakes at Ascot.

Something immeasurably better came along in the next year. This was Flying Fox, and no one ever knew how good he was. I had his owner's personal assurance on this point. Flying Fox was a miracle of condensed power, and I never knew a horse in training with such a neck as he had—"Clothed in thunder" most nearly expressed it. He became as good a stallion as he was a race-horse, but he died all too soon.

Following him we had Diamond Jubilee, another "triple-crowner," and he was the maker of Herbert Jones as a jockey, for no one else could ride him. Individually he was somewhat better-looking than his brother, Persimmon, for he showed rather more quality and was better balanced, but he was not nearly so good a horse. The vicissitudes of his career were remarkable, for after he had disgraced himself in his first race as a two-year-old on the July side at Newmarket it was decided that he should be "added to the list," and the late Mr George Barrow was instructed accordingly. Mr Barrow found certain difficulties which would not have deterred a younger vet, and so it happened that Diamond Jubilee was reprieved and ultimately sold to Senor Ignacio Correas for 30,000 guineas.

Volodyovski, the 1901 winner, must have been a really good colt, as he was favourite in a field which contained many notable winners. He would also have won the St Leger readily enough had not other jockeys made a dead set against Lester Reiff, who

had scrupulously kept out of the Goudie machinations. Nevertheless Volodyovski was a dead failure at the stud, and this may be stated as a problem to which no one will ever supply a solution.

Ard Patrick, the 1902 winner, was a great horse beyond all question, though his neck was turned up the wrong way and his hocks were away from him. There was a general grandeur about him despite these faults of conformation, and the Derby has never been won in better style, though I doubt if he was really better than Sceptre when fully "keyed up."

The difficulty of comparing classic winners may be illustrated by Rock Sand, who came next and won all the three great races. Had he then retired, he might have ranked with the very best, but in an evil hour for him he encountered Ard Patrick and Sceptre the following year, when they showed themselves to be of at least 14 lb. superior class, and not once only—for Sceptre did it twice. Nevertheless Rock Sand became a first-rate sire and got Tracery, a much better horse than himself.

St Amant owed his Derby victory, in a blinding storm, to his hood and blinkers, for John o' Gaunt, who would not face the rain, was certainly the better horse, and has made a permanent mark in the *Stud Book*.

Cicero, the 1905 winner, is a beautiful horse, rarely bred and a successful stallion, but not a great Derby winner.

Spearmint, however, who won in the following year, was in my opinion one of the very best, as proved by his trial with Pretty Polly and Hammerkop, the high class of the field behind him in the Derby, and the smashing style in which he won the Grand Prix.

Orby, who was quite extraordinary in his length and strength from hip to hock, takes high rank among Derby winners, though I doubt if he would have beaten Slieve Gallion if the latter could have been controlled. Signorinetta and Minoru do not call for consideration as Derby winners, but Bayardo, in the latter's year, was one of the best horses of all time. No Ascot Cup was ever—in my time—won quite so easily as was Bayardo's.

Lemberg, who won in 1910, is certainly the best English-bred son of Cyllene, but he cannot be classed with his half-brother, Bayardo. Moreover, it was clearly demonstrated the following year that Swynford was his master. Lemberg's hocks are rather away from him, as are Cyllene's, but he is doing well at the stud with such sons as Lemonora, Lembach, Pogrom and Weathervane.

Sunstar, I am sure, was a front-ranker, for he beat Stedfast readily in the Derby, though he had all but broken down, and Stedfast was trick and tie with Prince Palatine in their later races. It is needless to discuss what Sunstar might have done had his Turf career been extended. The case is analogous to that of Galopin, and at present Sunstar is certainly the most valuable stallion in England.

Such winners as Tagalie, Aboyeur and Durbar II. need no consideration. They represent the darkest period of the Derby.

The substitute Derby winners in the war time were all good horses, but Pommern's career was somewhat restricted by his owner being absent when the son of Polymelus was a four-year-old, and as a result Sam Loates, his trainer, did not run him against older horses. He has commenced very well at the stud. Fifinella, Gay Crusader and Gainsborough all come into a high

class. The filly was not half herself when she won the Derby, and she did much better in the Oaks; a very good filly no doubt.

But I think Gay Crusader must rank higher, especially as he won the substitute Ascot Cup; and Gainsborough, in my judgment, was better still, though Gay Crusader may have been the more ideal racing machine, while Gainsborough was suggestive of being good for any purpose to which a light horse could be devoted. He also won the Cup, and they are both sons of Bayardo.

During this period it must be remembered that Hurry On carried all before him, and there are abundant signs that his stock will do great things.

We come next to what I take to be one of the very best that I have ever seen, and that is The Panther, a perfect dream of a great horse. His Derby fiasco is "wrapped in mystery," but that horrible experience ruined him for racing. He had been backed for too much money, and horses do not win in such circumstances.

It fell to my lot to sell him to Senor Ignacio Correas, but he would never have got the permit to leave this country had he won the Derby, which he would have done with certainty but for undisclosed obstacles. I question if anyone ever saw such a good lot of foals as The Panther's first.

Grand Parade and Buchan in that year were, of course, good colts, but not superlative like the son of Tracery and Countess Zia.

Then we have seen Spion Kop win the Derby in record time, and I take him to be in many ways an advance on his sire, Spearmint, though his lines were not cast in equally pleasant places when he ran for the Grand Prix. He was never at his best again until

Ascot, 1921, when he would surely have won the Cup, but for indiscreet riding and bad interference. He goes to the Mentmore stud and is exactly the horse for Lord Rosebery's delicately bred mares.

As for the 1921 three-year-olds, Craig-an-Eran was, on the whole, the best of them, and he should make a stallion of very high value; but though he was jarred at Sandown last year, and his Leger running can in consequence be ignored, it is believed that he can be trained this year,[1] so that it is too early to pronounce on him, or Polemarch, who won the St Leger—nor is there much use in my writing about what we have all seen. "The old is better"—for my old memories are quite fresh, and they touch horses which few of us have seen.

I have skimmed through the horses that have been actually seen by me and have expurgated the worst, but the task of selecting the really best is beyond human capacity. I think, however, we are always going upwards, and that the average class of the British Thoroughbred continuously improves.

[1] Since the above was written it has been found impossible to train Craig-an-Eran, and he has retired to the stud for 1923 at a fee of 250 guineas.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT HAVE I DONE?

The Sporting League—Salvation of Racing—The Dunn Case overruled—The Starting Gate introduced—The *Stud Book* purified—Fresh Blood imported—Musket and Herod—Object Lessons provided—Studs that have grown up—Studs that have ceased—Strange Case of Cyllene's dam and "Tom" Vigors—Unpleasant Sequel

WHAT have I done in all the years of writing as "The Special Commissioner"? Well, it is hardly for me to say, but there have been a few things done which cannot be disputed. One was the institution of the Sporting League and, thanks to Mr Stutfield, the salvation of racing from the otherwise fatal effects of the judgment in the Dunn case. That was at least something to the good. I don't want to quote too freely from *The Sportsman*, but I shall never forget the judgment of the Court of Crown Cases Reserved as pronounced by Mr Justice Hawkins. Mr Bigham, Q.C., the leading counsel for Dunn, turned to his junior, Mr Stutfield, by whom I was sitting, and said: "That ends it finally." But Mr Stutfield asked me to come to his chambers, where he pointed out to me that the judgment was wrong, and as a result I wrote an article for the next day's paper, which exactly anticipated the judgment of the House of Lords, later on, in the case of Powell *v.* the Kempton Park Company Limited. Mr Bigham became a judge and a peer of the realm, and Mr Stutfield languished in obscurity, but it was he who saved the Turf at that most critical juncture.

Few people at the present day remember what the danger then was, and few indeed understood even at that time, but under the judgment of Mr Justice Hawkins the Prince of Wales or anyone else was liable to be arrested and searched at Goodwood because someone had laid the odds in the same enclosure. The scheme for overriding the decision of the Court of Crown Cases Reserved was entirely Mr Stutfield's and my own, and it was not until this test case had been carried to the House of Lords that the position was made entirely good. I do not know that anybody thanked Mr Stutfield for this, and I am quite sure no one ever thanked me. I am not clear whether Mr Stutfield still flourishes, but anyhow his book on betting law is by far the best that exists, and his information on such questions was, and I hope still is, the best available authority.

The strenuous conflicts with Mr John Hawke and the Anti-Gambling League need not be gone into, but it may be mentioned that the "National" Sporting League is really the North Country branch of the original body, of which the late Mr James Lowther was the great spokesman, and Lord Durham also was a leading support. I had practically all the stewards of the Jockey Club on the executive of the Sporting League at that time, together with Lord Hawke, Mr Guy Nickalls, the present Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, and other notables. A very great influence was exercised over the elections of that period and most of the faddists were ousted, though others infected by the microbe managed to get in.

However, I have told the plain truth about how racing was saved from the judgment of Mr Justice

Hawkins, who was a vicious old Radical, and anything but the sportsman he is generally represented to have been.

The next thing was getting rid of the starting difficulty, which got worse and worse under the flag system as the years went on. I incurred no little odium for some years because I persistently advocated the introduction of the starting gate. The late Mr Kennedy, a very good fellow individually, used to go mad against me in a little paper which he published, and I further maddened him by alluding to it as "an obscure sheet." He had no sense of humour and could not take a hit like that without serious resentment.

Be that as it may, I think there are few, if any, who remember that period who will not agree that my persistent advocacy accelerated, if it did not actually cause, the introduction of the starting gate.

Many and various were the gates tried at that initial period, but Slingsby's has always proved the best. Originally there was unbreakable webbing in place of the present tapes, and some starting gates had elastic attachments to relieve the pressure of a break-away; but jockeys used to regard this webbing with natural apprehension. Charles Archer once said to one of them: "You'll never come up against anything more serious than that until they let you down by it at the finish!" And it was quite true, as was soon discovered, so that now only breakable tapes are used.

There may be great possibilities of improving starting gates, but I think no one wishes to go back to flag-starting, nor will anyone old enough to remember the period deny that I was the main factor in the introduction of gate starting. The actual Jockey Club introducer

was Lord Downe, one of the most genuine and best of sportsmen.

In a similar sense the present Lord Jersey crowned my efforts to purify the *General Stud Book* by excluding American native lines. Ever since I saw American racing in 1887 I have known that there must be much of the coarsest blood in it, though Hanover, whom I then saw, was quite beautiful. From that moment I resolved—Give me Hanover and reject all the rest.

It was quite right, and Hanover would have been invaluable to the stud in England, being an absolute freak in his combination of Glencoe (twice) with Bonny Scotland, son of Queen Mary. There was but a very slight stain in his pedigree, which at that time would not have barred him from the *G.S.B.*, and did not, indeed, for many years later. In all my efforts to purify the *G.S.B.* I made a saving clause for Hanover.

As the sire of Rhoda B. (dam of Orby) he has made a lasting mark in the *English Stud Book*, and I am very sorry that the final purist decision as regards that book should not have made an exception in favour of Hanover, whose free Glencoe blood has "nicked" so thoroughly well with that of Pocahontas in England. The anomalous result of the regulation that exists is that whereas Orby, whose maternal grandsire was Hanover, is accepted and recognised, Sir Martin is rejected for the sole reason that his maternal grandsire was Hanover. It was quite right to come to that finally exclusive decision—of that I am satisfied, for the whole aim and object of a stud book is to ensure purity of blood, in so far as is possible; but I think the immense advantages offered to us by Hanover warranted an exception being made in his favour.

I tried hard to get Hanover stallions established in England while the *Stud Book* was still open, but one of them, Hand Or, died of pneumonia shortly after landing, and another, Handspring, dropped down dead on Russley downs within six weeks of his being there. Thus there would seem to have been some fatality against this male line reaching England.

In all such matters, where private enterprise is alone concerned, the difficulty of insufficient capital stops the way. I have indeed succeeded in bringing back good horses to England from Australia — more particularly the Musket male line — and that was done mainly through *The Sportsman*. Through the same channel I started the claim for Herod blood in Tail Male, and brought various stallions over from France, such as Pastisson (sire of Xeny), Le Souvenir and Arizona, while from Australia I had Trenton, Carnage, Great Scot (to restore the Blair Athol line if possible) and others. Descendants of Whisker (brother to Whalebone) were also introduced—Merman and Patron, for example; and this was done and advocated in *The Sportsman*, because I believed, and believed most firmly, in the need for fresh blood and the utility of giving object lessons.

Superficial critics have often charged me with using the paper for my own advantage, but that is all nonsense. I have tried, in so far as was financially possible, to illustrate the value of fresh blood when to myself the result would be anything but remunerative.

Indeed, so far as the Herod line goes, despite my efforts, I was not destined to see it make good, but, like Moses on Mount Pisgah, watched Mr E. Kennedy reach the Promised Land with Roi Herode, who pro-

ceeded in his first season to get The Tetrarch. Nevertheless I have been after him with Grey Fox (son of Le Samaritain), and with that magnificent stallion I can challenge all the world. His portrait cannot fail to be of abiding interest, for he is so well patronised by the best breeders in England that his failure is practically impossible.

The gist of the above remarks, however, is that I have never recommended anything in *The Sportsman* because it was mine, but because it was what, in my humble judgment, was the right sort to own, and therefore I became possessor of it. It is difficult to make the man-in-the-street understand these things; but it is surely easy to see that if you were working for yourself the profitable course would be to go in solely for fashion, which I never did, except in the one case of the purchase of Collar (by St Simon out of Ornament). But I never liked Collar, profitable though he was, as I did Trenton, whose death was among the most poignant griefs of my life.

That there is no Hebrew blood in me is a certainty, and yet I can best explain my methods in exploiting my ideas as to blood-stock breeding by comparing them with those of the Jews, who have from the earliest times always wished to give a practical demonstration of their meaning. Thus Jeremiah went all the way to the Euphrates and buried rotten rags there before he felt really ready to tell the Jews that they would be carried off to that quarter. Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, made himself horns of iron and butted the people, as an illustration of the prophecy which he was about to make, and even in these later days I have seen a Jew auctioneer of clothes, in Petticoat

Lane on a Sunday, throw down on the pavement a number of half-crowns—the alleged value of the suit he was offering. They would all be given to anyone who could prove that the suit was not worth the money. I must add that he urged the people to stand back, for "some of them might have adhesive tar on their feet!"

Anyhow I have always striven to show that I practise what I preach, and of course horse breeding is far too slow a game to arrive at great results in a material sense, unless you follow fashion, which, except in the case of Collar, I have never done.

It has been a great pleasure to watch the growth and increasing success of new breeding studs in England, such as those at Childwick Bury and Maiden Erlegh, both of which, from small beginnings, have grown to be among the most successful in this country. Indeed the success of Mr J. B. Joel at the former place differs most materially from that of his predecessor, Sir Blundell Maple, but he has devoted the whole of the land to blood stock, whereas Sir Blundell kept the part of it known as the Shafford Stud for Shire horses, whom I venture to consider useless brutes in any event.

Studs without end have come and gone during these thirty odd years: the Bruntwood Stud, where Major James Platt first had Kendal; the Howbury Stud, where Robert Peck had Saraband, Perigord and other good horses.

Poor Robert Peck! No more capable trainer ever existed than he when he had Doncaster, and afterwards Bend Or, in his charge, not to mention (with Gurry as his lieutenant) The Bard; but the last years of his life were not as happy as they ought to have been—at least that is my impression.

Major James Platt, who about that time took over the Howbury Stud, and wrote that he desired to be addressed in future as "Major"—yeomanry rank, I believe—did not remain there very long, but migrated to Suffolk, where also he continued to breed high-class yearlings, as well he might, for he had such mares as Lonely, St Marguerite, Mary Seaton, and others of that class; but he came to the conclusion that the game did not pay, and therefore sold off his stock and settled for a while in Yorkshire.

Another vanished stud which was of some importance was run by Mr Ralph Sneyd at Keele Park in Staffs. Blue Green was the principal stallion, and there were many good mares, one of the best being Lady Villikins. The first time I ever met Mr Rouch, whose horse photographs are known all over the world, was when I was just arriving at this stud and he, in company with Mr Boothby, Mr Sneyd's agent, had just completed a series of photographs of the yearlings and had stowed all his paraphernalia in the pony-trap which was close by, in the middle of the paddock. Whether my driving up alarmed the pony, or whether there was some more sufficient cause, I don't know, but it took fright, broke away and ended by smashing the trap and all Mr Rouch's photographs. Such was my first introduction—not a very favourable one.

Mr Sneyd, some years later, decided to sell all his mares in France, and I was fortunate enough to secure Lady Villikins—then sixteen years old, but almost due to foal to St Angelo—for 400 guineas. M. Edmond Blanc, who was present, let me have a Flying Fox nomination for 400 guineas, and the mare had only a few miles to go to his stud. Arrived there, she

produced Lady Angela (a good winner) after about three days, and returned to England with the foal and carrying Full Cry by Flying Fox. The late Duke of Devonshire gave me 1500 guineas for the mare and foal, and for him she produced not only Full Cry, but Marcovil, while Lady Angela won him four races in succession as a two-year-old.

It was in those early days that Sir John Robinson started breeding blood stock at Worksop Manor, and he has proved to be one of the stayers. In some of his early experiments he was associated with the late Mr Ashley of *The Sportsman*. I have good reason to remember one of these ventures, for poor old Tom Vigors, who thought he could do what he liked for Mr Gubbins, had bought Arcadia (dam of Cyllene), in foal to Kendal, for 2000 guineas at the July sales in 1901 for that gentleman, who promptly repudiated the transaction as soon as he was advised of it by wire.

Vigors came to me at the Rutland Arms the following morning and said that he could transfer the mare to Sir John Robinson if I would go with him and recommend the purchase. This was not an altogether agreeable task, but I thought that no possible harm could come of the purchase of Cyllene's dam, certain in foal, at such a price, and I therefore accompanied him to where Sir John (then Mr John) Robinson was staying. I recommended Arcadia (in foal to Kendal) in all good faith, and the more so as Kendal was by Bend Or out of a Macaroni mare—similar breeding to Bona Vista, the sire of Cyllene. Sir John said he would take over the purchase if Mr Ashley, who was not at Newmarket, would go halves with him, and this ended in my having to recommend Mr Ashley to do so, and it was done.

Mr. Hume Webster

The mare was insured and Mr Ashley thought all was well. So did I, though my task had been a thankless and hardly pleasant one. All went well for a while and the mare produced a nice filly, afterwards named Ziria, in 1902. She was mated with Martagon, and later on, when her insurance was expiring, the usual notices were sent, not once only, but twice. No answer was received, and so the insurance was not renewed. The following year she produced another filly, but died a few days after foaling, and was uninsured. The foal was saved and reared on another mare, but it was a worrying business to me, as can be imagined, though I had really no personal interest in it. Mr Ashley had been in blissful ignorance that the insurance had lapsed. Arcadia was only sixteen when she died. The two old friends settled the matter amicably, of course, but I always felt some unintelligible sense of blame in the matter.

Since then Sir John Robinson has bred many of the greatest winners on the Turf, and the Worksop yearlings are always among the sensational lots at Doncaster.

The above statement as to studs that have grown up within the last thirty years is very far from exhaustive. At Tickford Park there is a very important establishment, and Son in Law, who was bred there, is the principal stallion. Sir Gilbert Greenall is a comparative new-comer as a breeder of blood stock, and he has been remarkably successful, and there are many other new studs where blood stock is bred for sale, but for my part I always regret the cheery days when big studs had their yearlings sold at home, and of those studs the most notable was that of Middle

Park, the property of the late Mr William Blenkison. Hermit and Galopin were sold as yearlings there. Very pleasant too were the annual sales of the royal yearlings at Bushey Paddocks, and as Sainfoin, Memoir, La Flêche and Best Man were all produced and sold there in the concluding years of the stud, it cannot be alleged that the undertaking was given up on account of failure. The same may be said of the old Cobham Stud Company, the Marden Park Stud and not a few others. The work of selecting the best yearlings on such occasions was not half so strenuous as it is at Newmarket or Doncaster, amid the turmoil of a race meeting. However, "other times, other manners," and I suppose the old order has permanently changed.

CHAPTER XX

STRAY THOUGHTS ABOUT TRAINERS

The Older Trainers—William I'Anson at Highfield—Triumph with Mintagon—Curling—Marsh at Egerton House—Great Victories —"Old Gurry"—Rode Catalogue in 1864—No. 1 Bass—Dobson Peacock—John Osborne—"The Old Pusher"—Felix Leach—All-round Sportsman—George Blackwell—Chaleureux and Newhaven—Mr Gilpin—Spearmint and Kozak—What next?—Mr George Lambton — Great Winners—"Joe" Butters—"Willie" Waugh — Percy Peck — John Dawson — A. B. Sadler — Sam Pickering—Buccaneer—Others

NATURALLY I have known, and know, many trainers, but will only deal here with the older ones, some of whom I have written a good deal about already. I hardly remember a time when I did not know William I'Anson, who trained many great winners at Malton for the late Mr Perkins and, along with his brother Miles, ran the Blink Bonny Stud. Jenny Howlet, Beauclerc, Chittabob, Breadknife and Self Sacrifice may be mentioned in connection with his successes, and his crowning triumph was to win the Cesarewitch with the straight-kneed Mintagon, whom two other famous trainers had given up as hopeless. William is still fresh enough to carry on his good work, but somehow I think he prefers curling, bowls and an occasional game at billiards. There is no better judge of a yearling, and he was very popular at Newmarket when he settled down there for a year or two. I remember he used to have a screen covered

with *St Stephen's Review* cartoons in his Malton home. Perhaps he has it still.

Richard Marsh I have also known for many years —indeed it was before Egerton House was built that Phil May and I went to see him at Lordship, where he showed us pictures of notable horses trained by him for the Duke of Hamilton. Marsh was in his day a fine cross-country horseman—in fact he was well schooled in every department of his profession. His first grand triumph came with Persimmon, and he has since then trained three other Derby winners from Egerton House, where for years he had other horses besides King Edward's, but now for some time past his services have been devoted exclusively to the King, until, last summer, Lord Lascelles was admitted to the stable. There is no better or more courteous sportsman than Richard Marsh, nor is anyone better able to make the very best of the horses entrusted to his charge.

Mrs Marsh I have known since her Beckhampton days, when she was invaluable to her father, the late Sam Darling, as a volunteer secretary. She has now a married daughter, so time has flown apace!

None of the old-timers do I like better than Martin Gurry, whom I saw ride Catalogue to victory at Thirsk in 1864, as I remembered perfectly well when dining with him and the late W. T. Robinson some years ago. Gurry has retired from training, but he still continues to breed excellent blood stock and gets good prices for them. He was formerly head man to Robert Peck at Russley when they had Doncaster and Bend Or, and he has a wealth of anecdote which would make a fascinating book if he would consent to the making.

I should think there is no human being who does not like "Old Gurry." There is a quaintness of dry humour in his conversation which is quite unique, and it is worth anything to sit and hear him talk. He has a heart of gold and is always doing good turns for other people. It seems difficult to imagine that Gurry ever trained for the late Abington Baird, but he did at one time, and won the Derby for him with Merry Hampton, in consequence of which his house at Newmarket bears the name of "Abington Place."

A good many years ago Gurry suffered badly from dyspepsia, and doctors failed to do him any good, but on the recommendation of a friend he took to No. 1 Bass—a small bottle every day with his dinner. This made a new man of him, and he stocked his cellar so amply with it that he had an abundant supply for himself and occasional visitors all through the war. During that time it was not permitted to brew No. 1 Bass, but it is now, to the great joy of those for whom it serves as both meat and drink.

Miss West, who keeps house admirably for Gurry, is another old friend, for she was earlier on a manageress at the Rutland Arms.

There is an immeasurable wealth of information to be gained from Martin Gurry, and the number of prize bullocks which he has fed is legion.

My fancy strays northward all the time, and I am bound to think of Dobson Peacock, of the Manor House, Middleham, whom again and again I have met at Abington Place, and whom I remember long before that in Yorkshire. Years ago, in my early days on *The Sportsman*, I went and stayed with him, and we saw not only his own horses, but went on and saw

John Osborne's and Harry Hall's—the latter at "Spigot Lodge," where the old fashion of lack of ventilation and plentiful ammonia was painfully prevalent. I had been there years before in the days of Tommy Lye, when winter conditions rendered approach, through snow, almost impossible, but even then it was better than in Harry Hall's day, and yet Harry Hall trained good winners from there to beat horses trained under the most approved sanitary conditions.

Dobson Peacock is a Yorkshireman after my own heart, and I suppose no one at Middleham is better liked and respected. He always sends up a few good yearlings for sale, of which Re-echo is one of the latest successes, and he has a full stable of horses which win a large proportion of races. Money Glass may be noted among the latest of them.

I have mentioned John Osborne in the above connection, and there is no doubt about his capacity as a trainer, but his abiding fame is that of a jockey, and to my mind there never was a more capable jockey—I have, of course, seen Fordham, Chaloner, Wells, Archer and all the later ones, but never was John Osborne surpassed by any of them. He gained judgment of pace by his original experience in riding heat races—this he has told me himself—and he anticipated in a modified form the later American style, which led to his being known as "The Old Pusher." His last public mount was on Watercress for the St Leger in 1892, and he had really retired some years before that, but he trained The Guller, winner of the Chester Cup, in 1913, and rode him the full distance a few days before, he being then eighty years old or thereabouts.

I am not writing about jockeys, but I cannot forget

how John Osborne rode Vedette and Pretender and Apology and Prince Charlie (in the Two Thousand Guineas). Those were great performances, judgment of pace being shown to perfection when he made all the running on Apology for the Ascot Cup and defeated his brother-in-law, Tom Chaloner, who had ridden an old-fashioned waiting race on Craigmillar.

But I must not start writing about jockeys or I shall really begin to enlarge on the "spacious" days of Fred Archer and others, when the flag was in *their* control and gate starting had not been seen above the horizon.

Among the trainers of whom I am writing, Felix Leach is almost too young, and yet he is no chicken, though I have known him since he was one, in his early days with Mathew Dawson, when they trained Ladas and Sir Visto; and since then, in Persimmon's days, with Richard Marsh.

That Felix Leach should be collected—so to speak—in my memories is certain, for apart from training horses he has sporting instincts all round, and his terriers long ago gained great fame—Newmarket Cackler in particular. That leads to a curious story, for a good many years ago there was a dog show at Lingfield, and I was asked to judge the fox-terriers, having never done such a thing for over twenty-five years. I got on all right with the smooth ones, but in my days there were very few wire-haired ones, and those had straight hair.

I saw dogs in the wire-haired class who had crinkly hair and did not fancy them, but others with straight hair were not good dogs in themselves. A dog of obviously great character and conformation kept being

led past and I could not stand his coat. Yet what was one to do? None of the others was half such a dog, so somewhat grudgingly I gave him the prize and two other prizes, nor knew until afterward that it was the famous Newmarket Cackler. I should have looked well had I cast him!

Felix Leach has been not disinterested in game fowl and in greyhounds, and I should say the boys in his stable learn the best elements of pugilism. As a trainer he is one of the very best, now that earlier recollections of the work which Persimmon needed have been got over. No one could possibly have done better than he did with Orpheus and Spearwort, and there are many others coming along.

George Blackwell is one of the old brigade, though he has practically retired and has only the old jumper, Sergeant Murphy, to deal with. He too is full of all knowledge in regard to horses, and saw the dotty jointed Rock Sand safely through the three classics and on through his next season. Rock Sand's year was a trying one for Blackwell as he had Flotsam (Sir Daniel Cooper's) also in his stable, and there was not much to choose between them. The position was like that of John Porter when he had Orme, La Flêche and Watercress.

Blackwell graduated with Mathew Dawson like many others of the most capable, and he is one of those who, if he wants a thing done, can do it himself. Thus when, in the year 1898, the present Sir William Cooper came into my office and asked if we could find him a horse to lead Newhaven in work for the Ascot Cup, I happened to be able to offer what I thought an ideal animal for the purpose. This was Chaleureux, for 1000 guineas.

The deal was confirmed at once, subject to my having the horse "vetted" and dispatched to Newmarket to Blackwell as soon as possible. This was done, but Chaleureux, rightly or wrongly, had the reputation of being a bit savage, and Blackwell could not get a boy to do him at first, so fell to and did the horse himself. That is the class of man he is, and though Chaleureux proved too good for Newhaven as a taskmaster, and, indeed, did him more harm than good, Blackwell later on trained him for the Cesarewitch to such a pitch of perfection that even I, who never bet, had £5 on each way. He won in great style, and also the Manchester November Handicap, carrying 8 st. 10 lb.

He was just the sort of horse Blackwell has loved to train, thriving on his work and feeding up on it, but he was the last in the world—if one had only known—to gallop with one like Newhaven, who was only at his best early in the season when half fit—as might be imagined.

Mr P. P. Gilpin I cannot class as an old friend, but I hope he is a friend all the same. Once and once only did I go round his stable, and that was in the spring of the year when Spearmint was a three-year-old. Admiral Crichton was the three-year-old I went to see, as he was at that time supposed to be the crack. I did not quite like him, but stayed when we came to Spearmint—stayed while the others passed on, and formed a very definite opinion, which I expressed in *The Sportsman*. Sometimes you see the truth—sometimes there is darkness—but I saw truth that time, and I offered Mr Bottomley £1500 a year for a three years' lease of Wargrave (three parts brother to Spearmint) by the next post. Mr Bottomley, who was

hampered by some partner, wanted to sell the horse for 10,000 guineas, and ultimately sold him for £1500.

I cannot, however, forget how Mr Gilpin, years ago, before the Boer War, when my old friend, the late Major Dalbiac, wanted a likely chaser for a little money, sold him Kozak, then four years old, for I don't know what, but said he would make a good clerk if not a parson.

Never was a better purchase made, but poor Dalbiac went to South Africa and was killed at Senekal. He had left the horse behind with me, saying he was too good to take out there and get shot—he would come home and win the Grand National on him; and I verily believe that if Kozak had been kept for that purpose it might have been possible; but it was not to be. It ended in me selling Kozak for £100 to Lady de Crespigny for her to give as a birthday present to Sir Claude. I remember they thought he was lame when he arrived, but I should think he was the soundest and hardest horse Sir Claude ever owned, winning something like twenty steeplechases for himself and his sons, apart from other work. Kozak was a cast-off of Mr Gilpin's, but a right good one.

To enumerate the great winners trained from the Clarehaven stable (Mr Gilpin's) would be almost tedious, there are so many of them, and the cry is still they come, though that there will be any others as good as Pretty Polly, Spearmint and Spion Kop it would be rash to presume. There has been St Louis, however, already. Mr Gilpin has been extraordinarily successful in training long-distance winners, such as Hammerkop, Clarehaven, Sirenia and many others. He has invaded France and twice won the Grand Prix, and he is happy in the possession of a son (Victor)

who has inherited his father's ability and can at any time be depended on as *locum tenens*.

Mr George Lambton can hardly be classed among the old brigade, though I have known him for many years. It used to be a pleasure to see him ride at N.H. meetings. He was certainly about the best amateur of his day. Since he took to training he has enjoyed a very large measure of success, Canterbury Pilgrim and her sons, Chaucer and Swynford, Keystone and her daughter Keysoe representing some of his greatest successes. In no stable are horses more kindly treated than in Mr Lambton's. He is himself on the most friendly terms with them all. It is quite a pleasure to see this when you go round the stable with him.

Mr and Mrs Lambton are always ready to do their best for the general welfare of Newmarket, and during the war he was a most efficient and hard-working captain of the local Volunteer corps. Training as he does for Lord Derby, Lord Wolverton, Lord D'Abernon, Mrs Arthur James and Lord Stanley, with, occasionally, one or two for his brother, Lord Durham, Mr Lambton has good material to work on, and he certainly makes the best possible results with it.

One of the most popular trainers at Newmarket is "Joe" Butters, who began his stable tuition under John Scott, "The Wizard of the North." It is not so very many years since Butters established himself at the Kremlin, Newmarket, as he was for a long time in Hungary, together with old John Reeves, who is there still. Butters was in his day a very capable jockey, and within the last decade there was talk of a match in which he and John Osborne were to be the jockeys. Both were willing, but nothing came of it. Mrs Butters

is a daughter of the late James Waugh, whose sons have all gained distinction as trainers.

The eldest of them in England is W. Waugh, who until recently trained at Kingsclere with much success, but before that had charge of the late Sir Blundell Maple's horses at Falmouth House, in succession to Percy Peck. The stable was going very strong indeed when Sir Blundell died, and "Willie" Waugh is no doubt one of the most capable trainers in existence; but he and the whole family spent many years abroad and were thus not so well known in England at first as they ought to have been. The father was notable here in an early day when he trained Macgregor, in Kingcraft's year. "Willie" Waugh is not an optimist, but he knows his job—no man better.

Dawson Waugh is a peculiarly good and conscientious stableman and trainer. He developed at Kingsclere under the auspices of John Porter, and at Newmarket he did marvels for Mr Walter Raphael, to win a One Thousand Guineas and Derby with Tagalie, only just miss a Derby with Louvain, and win a Two Thousand Guineas with Louvois. He has a charming wife, who, doubtless, encourages him to accomplish such extraordinary successes with animals by no means in the very first class.

Tom Waugh, another brother, has trained for Sir Robert Jardine for many years, and Cinna, winner of the One Thousand Guineas and other good races, was a recent example of success. Charles Waugh has also done great things, and nothing greater than when he won the Cambridgeshire with Marcovil, who was believed to be beyond the capacity of any trainer to get another race out of him.

Percy Peck is a son of Robert Peck, and he trained for Sir Blundell Maple with much success, Childwick's Cesarewitch being one of many notable victories. He and Sir Blundell parted company from no fault on Percy's part, but owing to a stupid quarrel between Sir Blundell and his father—a quarrel engineered solely by female influence. I need not go into that, but can record that since then Percy Peck has trained first-rate winners, such as Cicero for Lord Rosebery, and has now the charge of Lord Durham's horses, with which he has won many races.

Another old friend of mine at Newmarket is John Dawson, but I knew his father and his Uncle "Mat" so well that I cannot regard him as other than young. Still it is a long time since he started training for the late Lord Ellesmere, and he has gone on ever since, popular and respected. He has paid no small attention to breeding, and among his successes in that direction Rambling Katie took high rank, while, to come to a later date, Marcus and Trespasser are very well worthy of honourable mention. His two sons did their part in the war, and one of them was captured and imprisoned in Asia Minor, the same camp where the Turks were "spoofed" by vamped-up spiritualism, insomuch that certain officers escaped. Mrs Dawson is a daughter of James Waugh and, like all the breed, genuinely good and true. They live at St Alban's House, built by Uncle "Mat," whose favourite nephew John was. Not a few happy evenings have I spent in that house.

I have embarked on a task in writing about the older trainers which becomes formidable as it proceeds, but I cannot close down the chapter without reference

CHAPTER XXI

RECENT TIMES AT SOUTH AMERICA

The Rio Jockey Club—The Courteous President—A Really Good Time—Landing at "B.A."—"Jimmy" Getting—The Grand Hotel—Racing at Palermo—Concerning the "Tote"—Stables at Palermo—The Jehus of "B.A."—Our Perilous Adventures thereanent—San Jacinto—Las Ortigas—Tracery—The Panther

I AM constantly asked about the voyage from Southampton to Buenos Aires and back, and what one can possibly do in the six days at "B. A." when returning on the same ship, as I always do. It may be of interest if I give my latest experience, which is one of many. I quote from *The Sportsman* of 8th March 1922:

FROM RIO TO "B.A."

R.M.S.P. *Andes*.

I AM on the voyage home as I write this, but my last despatch was from Rio, and I had not then learned how well I was going to be treated there. As a matter of fact, on the afternoon we arrived at Rio I landed with a friend who, being a member of the "B.A." Jockey Club, enjoyed reciprocal rights to use the Rio Jockey Club, and to that establishment we repaired so as to arrange about dining. We were very courteously received by the secretary, who showed us all over the club house, which is being greatly enlarged, and then we drove up one of the mountains at the back of the town as far as the Hôtel Internacional. It was desperately hot, but the

view all around and down into the bay is superb. The wonder is how the people live in these hill-side houses with any degree of comfort, or how tradesmen ever reach them. An ordinary landslide would carry dozens of them away like a pack of cards. Our taxi-man was more careful than most in these parts, and we got back to the ship successfully, and an hour or two later we landed again to dine at the Jockey Club. Now here is the point of interest, which shows what courtesy is extended in Brazil to visitors. We were at once, on arrival at the club, told that the President, Senor Linneo de Paula Machado, wished us to dine with him, and we were ushered into his room. He received us in the most courteous and hospitable fashion, and he is himself a really good sort, talking English well, and immensely interested in blood stock. With him we dined wisely and well in the open-air roof dining-room, and nothing would satisfy him but that we should come back to breakfast with him next day, and before that be driven out to see the old race-course and some of his horses in training.

RACING IN BRAZIL

This also we did. The horses in training are not his best, most of which are at San Paulo, and others are in France, but the experience was very interesting. The race-course is barely a mile round, and a new one is being, or about to be, made; but that necessitates the filling up of the bed of an old lake, and it will take considerable time no doubt. It is obvious, however, that racing in Brazil is on the up-grade. Breakfast at the Jockey Club was all that the most confirmed epicure could desire, and I have never been treated with more genuine

hospitality. I was not allowed to leave without promising to revisit my kindly host on the home voyage.

I have often regretted that it was not possible to treat all well-known sportsmen who visit England with some such hospitality, and I have tried to do what I can in that direction, but the problem in England is not so easy, for England is, from a racing point of view, the Hub of the Universe, and visitors going from there to the circumference are easily noted, whereas it is by no means so easy to distinguish the right people amongst the crowds that flock to England during the racing season.

The remainder of the voyage to "B.A." passed without any particular incident, but it was not until about 9 P.M. on the Saturday night that it was possible to land. Vaccination and other certificates, as well as the medical inspection, did not cause much delay, and having got through the customs, I was driven to the Grand Hotel, where I am certainly at home, and there was my old friend, Mr James Harmer Getting, waiting to meet me. Not to know "Jimmy" Getting in "B.A." is to argue yourself unknown. Of course he had everything ready for me, including a card of honorary membership of the Jockey Club, and a programme for each day in the coming week, commencing with breakfast and racing at Palermo on the morrow.

THE JOCKEY CLUB OF PALERMO

It is always a pleasure to breakfast in that beautiful oval room of the Jockey Club at Palermo, and there is certainly plenty of time given for doing so, as the first race does not start until 2.30 P.M., though there are no fewer than eight events on the card. Of course I met

At the Palermo Races (February, 1920)

HARMER GETTING WILLIAM ALLISON DR. JUÁREZ CELMAN

many friends during the afternoon, amongst them being Sr Ignacio Correas and Sr Unanue, but Sr Unzue was away at Mar del Plata. There was an industrious "tip," however, that the last-named gentleman would win at least three races. His trainer, Torterolo, however, seemed to be anything but confident of his doing so, except indeed that great, fine three-year-old filly, Dorancia, must have a good chance for the sixth race, but then she had Zigzag to beat, and this old horse is a really brilliant sprinter. He had to give the filly eight kilos, and he succeeded in doing so very cleverly. He is a beautifully bred horse by Val d'Or (imp.) out of Ondulee (imp.) by St Simon out of Ornis by Bend Or out of Shotover. Dorancia is also by Val d'Or, her dam being Petulancia. The two-year-old races were about the earliest of the season, and here Sr Unzue supplied the two favourites, but it was the public who insisted on elevating them to that position. One of them, Gandoumint, an iron-grey colt by Pippermint, is full of promise, and he ran very fast, but is probably backward. I should think he will prove the best we saw. The seventh race was won by a very good-looking son of Your Majesty and Haya (dam of Amsterdam). His name is Utrecht, and he never gave his field a chance. There was conclusive proof during the afternoon that an owner whose horses are known to be always out to win has no chance whatever to back his own on any reasonable terms. Sr Unzue's stable (Stud Indecis) is in this position, and thus we saw his filly, Tajada, start with 19,627 tickets on her, nothing else touching five figures, while the winner totalled 9273 (second favourite), the second 6217, and the third 2853. Again, in the second two-year-old race, his colt, Gandoumint, had

27,977 tickets taken, as against the winner's 13,548, the second's 5122, and the third's 8313. Even Zigzag was not so heavily backed as Sr Unzue's Dorancia, the figures being 25,093 and 30,226 respectively. This notwithstanding the fact that Torterolo was by no means confident of winning with any one of Sr Unzue's three.

PREPARATIONS FOR RETURN

The Monday was perforce spent in business arrangements, such as visiting the bank (River Plate), where the manager, Mr Scott, is one of the very best, arranging details of return passage at the Royal Mail office, and meeting friends, old and new, at the Jockey Club, which has now been improved beyond the possibility of further improvement, and its catering, under the management of Edouard G. Cipollina, cannot be surpassed. On Tuesday came visits to various training stables at Palermo—studs, as they call them—and the first one was where Aquino trains for Sr Victorica Roca. This is one of the most important stables in the country, and it is here, on a big, somewhat raised lawn, that the famous Ojo de Agua yearlings are sold. Horses were only just coming in from their afternoon work, but Aquino was good enough to let us see them. They included the very sensational two-year-old filly Energie, by Your Majesty out of Energica. She cost 57,000 dollars at the Ojo de Agua sale, and looks as though she may be worth it, though she is backward as yet. A fine two-year-old by Your Majesty is Big Baby, out of La Nenita (dam of Pulgarin, a first-rate Cyllene winner). Another really good two-year-old is Bul Bul, also by Your Majesty, and he cost 36,000 dollars. The good-

looking Utrecht is in this stable, and so is the now five-year-old Hermann Goos, by Your Majesty out of Energica. He has won many good races. It would be easy to give many more details of this fine stable, but it is not easy to interest English readers in matters outside their own country. They may like to know that the produce of Cyllene in the Argentine have won considerably more than did their predecessors in England, and the same can be said of Your Majesty stock. Polar Star has also been very successful.

Leaving this stable, we went on to the Stud Indecis (Senor Unzue's), where Torterolo is the trainer, and there he has all arrangements thoroughly up to date, including the yard, which had been well swilled down with disinfectant. Juan Torterolo is one of the most successful trainers in the country, and he and his father (whom also I saw) are no strangers to Newmarket. His brother Domingo is one of the most successful jockeys, but he, unfortunately, has been very ill. The most interesting horse in the stable is the grey, Palaspavos, by Papanatas (son of Pippermint). He is a champion stayer, both at Palermo and Mount Video, but both his front hoofs are split, and it may be impossible to train him again. He would make a very interesting stallion, as he is a direct descendant of Hermit, whose line has died out in England. You will see no finer blood stock anywhere than in the "Stud" Indecis. Dorancia, for instance, is a grand filly, but it is not my purpose to go into details, though it may be right to say that Senor Victorica Roca was the head of the list of winning owners last year.

AN ADVENTUROUS DRIVE

I hasten to add that we went in the third instance to see Daniel Cardoso's stable, where he has some extraordinarily good colts, the property of Mr Pats. The best of these, to my mind, is a very remarkable bay colt by Your Majesty out of Marie Helena. He cost 43,000 dollars at the Ojo de Agua sale, and he looks worth the money. The best old horse in the stable is Gaulois, by Cyllene out of Pirita. In this stable I found everything really well done, and trainers have overcome all obstacles except the hot weather and the monotony of the same training ground and the same race-course, for which the totalisator is alone to blame.

It is necessary to write a mere impression of these good trainers and their stables, but I cannot conclude without some reference to the adventures of myself and Mr Getting in our journey to Palermo and back. It necessitated the use of three taxis, the first having burst a tyre before we got half-way there, and the second gave us, on the return journey, a typical exposition of how *not* to drive. All Argentine drivers appear to be quite reckless, and ours ultimately dashed on to pass a cross-road with a horse carriage coming from the right and a tramcar from the left, all going at unreduced speed. Our man at the last moment turned his car sharp to the left, and, I am glad to say, just missed the horse, but that did not prevent his dashing into the tramcar. We were very lucky to escape as we did. Mr Getting cut his knee rather badly, and I, who saw what was about to happen twenty yards before it did happen, was practic ally uninjured. The taxi was smashed up, and we got another, which went along even more recklessly,

insomuch that it was only by a hairbreadth that we escaped a similar and probably worse accident, but Providence watched over us. Never did I see or imagine such driving, and it is really wonderful that the death rate in "B.A." is not largely increased by it. Our troubles did not, however, prevent us from dining well at the Jockey Club, with Mr "Barbaro" Hill and friends, and subsequently interviewing Mr Rufino Luro, who, with his brothers, wants a good stallion. It was a day that did not tend to compose the nerves.

Whether the experiences of the earlier day shook the nerves or not, we put in two more strenuous days, which are described in the following article published in *The Sportsman* of 11th March 1922, and there was a good deal more done, even on the morning of the sixth day—the *Andes* sailed at 4 P.M.

That will give some idea of what can be done in a six days' stay at Buenos Aires, if only you know the ropes. I always see what I want to see and whom I want to see during that period, thanks to the everlasting Mr Getting, who complains that I kill him during the week, though he is much more likely to kill me, albeit he is some eight years my senior.

Apart from business and blood-stock fancies, the voyage from Southampton to "B.A." and back is the most delightful one a played-out Englishman can do in winter, and I recommend it to all.

SAN JACINTO AND LAS ORTIGAS

TRACERY AND THE PANTHER

R.M.S.P. *Andes*.

SENOR UNZUE most obligingly made the night journey from Mar del Plata to "B.A.," to go down with us in

the morning from the Retiro Station by the 8.30 International train to Mercedes, and thence to drive to his house and breeding stud, San Jacinto. The railway journey from "B.A." is about eighty miles, and it had been raining very hard the day and night before, so that the road on arrival was almost axle deep in parts. Four good horses drew us through all difficulties in a very high-wheeled, covered vehicle, which seemed incapable of losing its balance. The road is one upon which no metal has ever been put—only road scrapings returned on to it when the occasion seems suitable. Still, it suffices, and the well-handled team, all got by thoroughbred sires, made light of their task, while a peon on a grandson of Le Sancy came loping along behind us and passing to the front to open gates.

Senor Unzue had not been home for two months, and it was easy to note how glad the servants were to see him again. His Irish stud groom, Johnny Horan, is as fit as ever, though he dates from the days of Mr W. Kemmis and Whipper In. We went at once to see some of the stock, but inasmuch as there are 110 brood mares, it is, of course, impossible for me to give any comprehensive account of them here. The first point of interest to me, however, was that I saw an extremely good colt-foal by Grey Fox out of Batata, by Batt (half-brother to Flying Fox). The horse was only tested for stud purposes before coming to England, and this is the result.

MARES FOR ENGLAND—AN OLD FRIEND

Senor Unzue has conceived what I take to be a first-rate idea, and that is to send some of his best mares in foal to Tracery (to English time) to the December

sales. Nowhere have I ever seen finer mares than those of his by Val d'Or, and it seems to me that they should prove to be of quite sensational value. He will also send over one or two of his best mares forthwith to be covered by Grey Fox, and these, too, will be offered in December. He is himself coming over in June, and intends for the future to make many visits to Europe, where he has not been for eight years. Small wonder that he is "tired" in all the circumstances, with the duties of President of the "B.A." Jockey Club imposed on enormous business interests.

I think I never saw Tracery looking so well, and the foals by him—some to Argentine and some to English time—are quite as good as any he ever sired in our country. The youngest Tracery colt is an exceptionally good one. He is exactly typical of his sire both in colour and conformation. January foals born in the Argentine have really a great advantage over our early foals, for at San Jacinto the herbage is now at its very best, the weather is perfect, and the foals can be turned out with their dams from the first. There is an enormous acreage of land with almost boundless paddocks, and cattle without end feeding there along with the blood stock. The emus (so-called ostriches) number about 6000. They are as tame as deer in a park, but they fend for themselves, and are easy to catch when the season comes for relieving them of their feathers, which are used for making brushes, and are always in steady demand. Away in an enclosure of their own there are African ostriches, which, of course, are very much larger than the emus. It would be pleasant to spend a week or two exploring all this

splendidly stocked estate, but we did the best possible in a few hours.

VAL D'OR AND OTHER STALLIONS

Besides Tracery, we saw old Val d'Or, still very fresh and well, though stone blind. This does not seem to trouble him at all, for he finds his manger without difficulty, and moves about his box quite freely. The grey stallion, Papanatas, by Pippermint, is one of the most beautiful horses imaginable, almost too beautiful, in fact. He has already gained lasting fame as the sire of Palospavos. This line of blood is particularly interesting, as it represents Hermit in tail-male, through St Mirin, and seems likely to carry on permanently. I wish I could convey even a faint impression of the beauties of San Jacinto, but the place is so vast and wide-spreading that no poor words of mine can in any degree do it justice. I could write at full length about the mares, many of which are among the finest in the world, and among them I was pleased to see Forest Track looking splendid. She is a four-year-old daughter of Tracery and Forest Lassie, by Isinglass out of Baroness La Flêche. She lost her foal this year, and she is coming over to be mated with Grey Fox.

Senor Unzue's house has been much added to and improved since I was first there, a good many years ago, and it is now quite perfect, though not on too large a scale. Yet I can see that the owner longs for fresh fields to conquer, and we shall soon see him racing in England. I saw several of his two-year-olds that were bred to English time, notably a grand chestnut filly, sister to Remanso, by The Whirlpool. She is broken, and will shortly go into training so as to be tried before

it is decided that she is good enough to send to Europe, The colt by Lemberg out of Sixpenny might also be sent, and there are several others, but, naturally, the expense of such a journey will only be incurred for such as have satisfied their trainer. It is quite possible, I should imagine, that Tracery yearlings may be sent to Doncaster in the coming years, but of that I have no certain knowledge.

The rain had ceased during the afternoon, and the heat became rather oppressive as the steam came up from the hitherto thirsty land. It was strange, indeed, as we drove back to Mercedes with another team of horses to find how marvellously the road had dried up since the morning. Senor Unzue accompanied us, and I noticed in particular a grand new church in Mercedes. On inquiry I found that he had built it, at a cost of £50,000. This reminds one of the late Sir Tatton Sykes.

A VISIT TO LAS ORTIGAS

We all got back to "B.A." before 8 P.M., but our host was tired out and went straight to his home there, while Mr Getting and I made, as usual, for the Jockey Club to dine. There we found Senor Ignacio Correas, and with him arranged details of our visit to Las Ortigas in the morning. A convenient train to Moron Station got us there all right before midday, and we were driven thence to the stud of Las Ortigas, where, in their beautiful bungalow, Senor Correas and his charming family were ready to receive us. There has been trouble at this stud through worms or other parasites, which inflicted bad damage on the foals, of which three of the thirty-two by The Panther died, and one of these,

a colt out of Rue Time (imp.), was considered the very best of them all. I never heard of unweaned foals being so badly affected by worms as this, but most of them are now past the trouble. The stud groom, Garlick, is a Yorkshireman, with the fullest knowledge of his job, but he has had a hard time of it with so many foals ill, and even now they are being fed on Quaker Oats, and muzzled when turned out with their dams lest the herbage may have been the source of the trouble. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, I question if there is in the whole world a finer lot of foals by one horse than those by The Panther. There is positively not a wrong one among the whole lot that I saw. They have without exception big, clean hocks, with great shanks, and absolutely unimpeachable fore-legs. Goodness knows which is the best of them. A dozen good judges might each pick a different one.

WONDERFUL FOALS AND THEIR SIRE

I have, perhaps, a natural liking for the colt out of Sixpenny (imp.), by William the Third out of Montem, though they tell me that the one out of Rue Time (imp.) was better. Rydal Fell (imp.) has a beautiful Panther filly, and another that dwells in memory is a Panther colt out of Song (imp.) by Spearmint. Equally notable is the Panther colt out of that great mare Sibila; but, really, it is impossible to discriminate among them, they are so numerous and, without exception, so well-grown and good-looking. It was a real treat to see The Panther led out on the lawn in front of the house. He improves in grandeur and quality year by year, and he has stamped his foals with his own quality. A more perfect-tempered horse there could not be, and I have

not the slightest doubt that we have seen no better one during this century. Whatever was the cause of his Derby fiasco, I am certain that the horse himself was not to blame. It was a fortunate incident so far as Senor Correas was concerned, for The Panther would never have been permitted by the Board of Agriculture to leave the country had his racing career proceeded to its natural conclusion. As it was, the Board was very disinclined to let him go, and it took me a month or two to persuade them.

Several of The Panther's foals are chestnuts, as was only to be expected, but I saw none with Gallinule characteristics. They are more like the Tracery chestnuts, and I saw only one that did not at once recall the sire. This was a very well-grown chestnut filly out of Maldicion by Neapolis. She possibly takes more after the dam's side of the family, but that is nothing against her, for Neapolis was by Springfield out of Napoli, by Macaroni out of Sunshine.

A HARDY VETERAN

Old Diamond Jubilee, who was also led out on the lawn, carries his twenty-five years bravely, and he was head of the list of winning stallions last season, his stock winning forty-seven races, value 309,420 dollars, against Cyllene's thirty-five races, worth 267,746. Craganour came third, Old Man fourth, St Wolf (by St Frusquin) fifth, Amsterdam (by Pietermaritzburg) sixth, and Your Majesty seventh. The best classic winners were got by Diamond Jubilee and Cyllene respectively—Moloch by the former, and Pulgarin by the latter. But amid all the glamour of these successes, no one can look at Diamond Jubilee and put him in the same class with

The Panther. Of course he is handicapped now by age, but I have known him throughout his life, and to my mind he never was half such a horse as The Panther, whose racing career may be taken as one of the most remarkable tragedies of the Turf. I saw a good many old friends among the mares, notably Rosaline (dam of Rosedrop), who is very fresh, and certainly in foal to The Panther. I may here state that the Argentine breeding season now begins on 1st July instead of 1st August, so that there is not so very much difference between an early foal to their season and a late one to ours. We breakfasted with Senor Ignacio Correas, and his son and daughters, who speak English quite well, though they disclaim any pretensions to do so. There were also two cheery grandchildren running about, and no one could have failed to be happy in such pleasant surroundings. I wish I could write about it all at greater length, but that must not be, in view of the coming flat-race season. We interviewed The Panther in his box, where, as always, he was the ideal of character, temperament and quality. Then came the time to drive back to Moron Station, and reach "B.A." for dinner. The day had been in every sense agreeable and instructive.

MORE STALLIONS WANTED

There is a great want of fresh imported stallions in the Argentine, and as I write it is possible that several important transactions will be completed—indeed they would already have been so were it not that the trade in cattle is so bad and the exchange has gone against Argentine buyers. Thus two years ago I could only get between seven and eight pesos to the pound sterling,

whereas this time I got over twelve. This was good business for me in a small way, but is all against the chance of bringing off big deals with the buyers there.

After all that came a happy return to England, which is the best place, grumble as we may.

CHAPTER XXII

RACING JOURNALISTS

The First "Special Commissioner," Fred Taylor—Early Impressions of him—"Schooling" Journalists—"Treasure" Dalbiac—Others—Earlier Examples—Frank Lawley—*Per Contra* "Pavo"—The Chattanooga Episode—Good Old Cole—He loses a Sovereign—John Corlett and Charles Greenwood—Corlett and Another Man's Walnuts—His Purchase of Queen Gold—Greenwood a Great Journalist and "Reader" of Races—Fred Ball very capable—Regretted Omissions

THE first of the above who ever attracted me was Fred Taylor, "The Special Commissioner" of *The Sportsman* in the sixties and early seventies. He had not much of a literary style, but he understood what he was writing about, and that is the great essential. I know I thought no end of his writings in those early days. He was originally, to the best of my belief, an army vet., and, I remember, he had lost a forefinger by some accident. He was a very well-known figure at ring-sides, and he used to go round to studs and stables very much as I do—or ought to do—though I have somewhat enlarged on his sphere, by going abroad and striking into other changes.

That Fred Taylor must have been a very capable journalist I cannot doubt, or he would not have impressed himself so strongly on me, even when I was at school. The plain fact was that he understood his subject, and throughout very many years sporting journalists neither understood their subject nor were they educated men.

I have been the means of starting two or three on a journalistic career who have said, "Nonsense! How can *I* write?"—and I have pointed out that they are educated men and understand their subject—an enormous handicap in their favour. Such experiments have never failed, and the first of them was in the case of poor old "Treasure" Dalbiac, who made thoroughly good on *The Sporting and Dramatic* and *Country Life Illustrated* until he went out to the Boer War, where he met his death at Senekal. I thought so much of him that I acted as *locum tenens* for him on *Country Life* until after his death, but I suppose few of his friends knew that he was ever a journalist. He was so, however, and a good one too, and, as I write this, there is in front of me an inkstand made from a hoof of Moatlands, on whom he won the Grand Military Gold Cup over the old Rugby Course long years ago.

I could mention others whom I have successfully introduced to sporting journalism, but poor old "Treasure" has "passed on," and they have not. I am sure he would not mind, anyhow; and he is a sufficiently typical example of what I mean.

It is a mystery to me to this day why so few men should trust their ability to write anything worth reading. Only recently, on board ship, it was the eve of Valentine's Day, and I wrote one or two anonymous trifles purporting to be from other people, but I was taxed with having done so—for the simple reason, as alleged, that no one else on board could have written them. This was absurd, for dozens of people on board could have written better, had they thought of trying to do so.

Time was, of course, when education, in rare in-

stances, was made too evident in sporting articles and "Pomponius Ego" in *Handley Cross* was a sufficient lampoon in this connection. The genuinely best man of the early days, as I remember them, was the Hon. Francis Lawley, who was a scholar, a gentleman and a sportsman without reproach, and he not only brought out John Kent's book on *The Career of Lord George Bentinck*, but also a charming work on the *Life and Times of "The Druid,"* who was the father of my old friend, Sydenham Dixon. "The Druid," by the way, was at Rugby, though long before my time. Francis Lawley was in his younger days in Government office and much on the ascendant, but something occurred to check his career, and he gravitated to journalism. Here what I have always contended was demonstrated: the man knew his subject absolutely and he was highly educated. Therefore his articles in *The Daily Telegraph* were valued by all who read them to the end of his life.

I never met a man whose personality was more truly pleasant. The last time I ever saw him he told me many stories of the American Civil War when he was out there with the Southern States armies, and Mrs Jefferson Davis, who was still alive at the time I last saw Mr Lawley, had written him a letter which he showed me, saying, among other things, that she always felt the Southern States had no chance, but she must stand by her husband. "We'll hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple-tree"—so goes the song; but nothing of that kind was contemplated in those really honest days, before there was any idea of Bolshevist insanity.

The Hon. Francis Lawley was by far the best equipped and most brilliant sporting journalist of the

latter half of the nineteenth century. We must now come among the really business journalists.

By way of contrast there was old "Pavo" (Langley) of *The Morning Post*, who had no real knowledge about horses, and certainly no capacity to write English, but by a certain obtrusiveness had for long thrust himself into a position of some fictitious importance. It is best, I suppose, to hold on to the old maxim, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*," and leave him with the old Chattanooga story to his debit. That story is absolutely true, for the incident occurred in my presence. "Pavo" had come to see the Cobham yearlings in 1875 or 1876—I forget which—and the manager, the late Mr Richard Bell, in a foolish moment, had the eighteen-year-old Chattanooga brought out and shown to him as one of the best Blair Athol colts. "Pavo" took copious notes of the old horse, while the manager kept calling attention to his good points. Finally, however, Mr Bell burst out laughing, and said: "Why, you old fool, it's Chattanooga!"

On that the wrath of Mr Langley was such that he went straight away back to the station and "crabbed" the Cobham Stud for ever afterwards. I, whose sole offence was that I was present and could not help laughing, shared in the condemnation as long as poor old "Pavo" lived.

It might be easy enough to play a similar trick on almost anybody with a backward two-year-old or even three-year-old, but Chattanooga, at the time mentioned, looked even more than his age, with a tremendous crest, and no human being who knew anything about blood stock could have been taken in as "Pavo" was.

By way of contrast I recall old Cole, of *The Field*,

than whom there never was a more courteous and kindly gentleman, nor one who knew better what he was writing about and how to write it. He was always most scrupulously dressed and groomed—so to speak—his hair and moustache being special subjects of care. Indeed he used to be known as "The Count," and really he would have posed well in the earlier half of the last century among the élite of that time. If I remember rightly, he was also the "Van-driver" of *Bailey's Magazine*. For many years he used to stay at the Rutland Arms, Newmarket, and always occupied the table next the inner door of the coffee-room, until it was his by almost prescriptive right. That table is supposed to be mine now, but I am always glad to see other friends there, as they well know. I remember good old Cole losing a sovereign over me once. It was in 1895, and it so chanced that on the first day of Ascot I had an attack of the most intolerably acute neuritis in the right shoulder and arm. I had to get away after the second race. Curiously enough, in struggling through an article at Waterloo Station with a pencil held in both hands I gave every winner for the following day.

I happened to be staying at Thames Ditton, and got home, but there was no such thing possible as bed. The doctor gave salycene, and such-like remedies, without effect, and, to make a long story short, on the third night he injected morphia to compel sleep, but the twitch of that pain would have awakened the dead, and, sure enough, it awakened me after ten minutes, the result being that I had no sleep and a horrible headache.

Then came the Friday night, the fourth consecutive sleepless one, and the next day was the Cobham sale. I got the doctor (the late Dr Riley) to go with me, and

he sat opposite me at the luncheon-table, next Mr Cole. It was customary to make speeches in those days on such occasions, and I did so with my right arm screwed up, almost immovable.

I suppose I must have looked a bit of a wreck, for I presently saw Cole shedding tears, together with another friend who was facing me.

Dr Riley asked them the cause of their trouble, and found that their idea was that this must needs be my last public appearance. It is pleasant, even now, to think that good men regretted me by anticipation, though there is such a thing as "the crying drop"—even in good champagne.

The upshot of it was that Dr Riley bet Cole a sovereign that I should be there again next year, and of course I was; but the marvel of that sale was that in looking after all the details during the afternoon I forgot my own trouble, and on going back home slept for sixteen hours, to awake with the neuritis entirely gone; nor have I had the slightest touch of it from that day to this. Had anyone pretended to cure me that afternoon with this or that, should I not have given him a splendid testimonial? As it was, there was a clear proof of neuritis curing itself—if you can only forget it. Poor Cole, who bet against my life, has long predeceased me.

Two very notable journalists were John Corlett and Charles Greenwood. Neither had any pretensions to literary style, but they wrote about what they understood and were always eagerly read. John Corlett was far more cosmopolitan in the scope of his abilities, and he had a splendid memory for old-time events and characters. For some period he wrote "Vigilant" for

The Sportsman, but the foundation of his fortune was when he secured *The Sporting Times* for £50. This was a splendid investment, thanks to his own ability in getting together a brilliant staff of Bohemians whose names will long be remembered. The paper became a really wonderful success, and though it went down for a while after Corlett disposed of it some years ago, it is again going strong now.

It would be quite possible to fill a book with memories of John Corlett and his staff. He was a great politician of the old Tory school, and had fortune ever led him into Parliament he would have made considerable stir. The motto of his paper advocated old Port, but I think that he really preferred old Burgundy. He certainly was a valiant trencher-man, and in this connection I remember him coming into the coffee-room of the Rutland Arms about 11 P.M. a good many years ago. He had been dining well with old Tom Jennings, but espied a large dish of walnuts on one of the tables from which a well-known but somewhat reserved sportsman was just about to retire to bed. This gentleman had a great fancy for walnuts, and had brought a sufficient supply of a special kind to last him all the week.

John Corlett caught sight of the dish and jumped to the conclusion that it was provided by the hotel. "Aha!" he cried. "Walnuts, by Jove!" and he instantly ordered a bottle of vintage Port; then sat down to the walnuts and did not get up again until he had finished the whole lot, under the pained gaze of their owner, who did not like to let him know his mistake. The Port also was finished, and then the good man went off cheerfully to bed. Nay, more, he was up in time for the first train in the morning, as fresh as a lark.

John Corlett was a very old friend of mine, and I wrote for *The Sporting Times* long before it had ever occurred to me to expect remuneration for writing. He never had much luck as an owner of race-horses—indeed his "hair-trunks" became a byword among his staff—but he once bought a nice yearling filly for £100 from me, on the occasion of a visit to Cobham. This was Queengold, by Sorcerer (son of Ormonde) out of Lady Sterling (dam of Cooee, etc.). She was really useful and won him a race or two, but he aspired too high. She became a rare good brood mare afterwards, practically all her stock being winners. Perhaps the best of them was Gera.

I must not let myself stray into more reminiscences of John Corlett. He was a great character and, one might almost add, a great man. That I liked him well goes without the saying.

It was not my fortune to know "Charlie" Greenwood very well, but that did not prevent me from appreciating the value of his work, for his knowledge of all the business side of racing was unequalled, and his "Hotspur" articles in *The Daily Telegraph* were always in eager demand in any and every race week. He had the capacity to write anywhere, and I have often seen him standing up in a paddock and scribbling away at a great pace, with apparent ease. Now I should say the late Jim Smith ("Vigilant" for many years) was Greenwood's equal in knowledge of the inner workings of the game, but he had not the same facility in committing his knowledge to paper. Then, too, Greenwood was quite unrivalled as a "reader" of races, and practically all the reports used to be taken from him.

If he erred at all in his journalistic proclivities, it was

that he inclined rather to the professional crowd who did not like the starting gate or jockeys like Lester Reiff, who headed the winning list but kept himself clear of all outside influences. Now my feeling was very strong on the side of Reiff and the gate, and in fact anything else (such as the draw for places) that could get us away from the bad old days when a comparatively few jockeys had things all their own way and, especially, controlled the flag starts, and took the best positions on the rails.

I am sure that Charles Greenwood was not consciously biassed, but most of us have a tendency to support our friends, no matter how fairly we may try to hold the scales. Anyhow he was a racing journalist who, within his own limits, has never been surpassed.

Fred Ball, who was Greenwood's understudy on the *Telegraph*, and a very capable one at that, succeeded to the post of "Hotspur" and carried on for some years with very fair success. In no respect was he brilliant, but he was a genuine hard worker, always doing his very best, and he was a most able journalist in all the technical details of the profession. Thus, when a year or two before his death he did the "Travelling" notes on racing for *The Evening Standard*, I have never seen that work so well done, and I used to be fairly astonished by the way he could sit writing in the press-room and still collect first-rate information of all that was going on in the paddock. This he would do by questioning me or anyone else who came in, but it was the way in which he assimilated the information without any delay that surprised me.

Fred Ball used to own a very remarkable raven which took pleasure in killing rats. It used to delight

Two Special Commissioners—Elliot Hutchins, George Lowe

him to recount the exploits of this bird. It lived in a big outdoor aviary, and when live rats were caught and turned in there, would kill any number of them.

He never, to the best of my belief, knew why he lost the berth of "Hotspur" on the *Telegraph*, and he was always very sore about it, but I suppose it was because he was one of the old order, and his literary merit was not up to date.

I have omitted from these memoranda many journalists of note who well deserve a place—for example, Martin Cobbett and his brother "Jack"; nor should one forget Horace Lennard, whose talents reached far further than mere racing journalism; Elliot Hutchins and George Lowe should be remembered, the latter a man with infinite knowledge of dogs as well as of horses, yet sloppy in his use of language. They were both "Special Commissioners" in the week when Phil May and I were at Newmarket, and I don't remember which was on which paper. It should be noted, however, that *The Sportsman* man, whoever he may be—I think it was Hutchins—is "*The* Special Commissioner," and that has been my title for thirty-one years. It seems a long time! Most specially, however, I should not forget good old Smurthwaite, of *Bell's Life* and *The Sportsman*. He was one of the best in his day, and he never met a man who was not his friend. He did work on *The Sportsman* in his later days, and his work was always good. Besides, he had Yorkshire knowledge.

CHAPTER XXIII

STRANGE CHARACTERS

Colonel North—How did he do it?—Chaotic Betting—His Box at Epsom—The Tower Hamlets Volunteers—The Colonel as a "Ped."—"How's that for *The Sportsman*?"—Private Racing at Newmarket—Sundays at Avery Hill—John Roberts and the Billiard-Table—Colonel North as a Candidate at Leeds—His Amazing Sale of Horses and Greyhounds at Avery Hill—Hogarthian Scene—Parson Parkes—Preaches to Mrs Asquith—Takes to Training—Making Horseshoes during the War—A Great Platform Speaker—"Pray silence for the Rev. A. W. Parkes!"—Class or No Class—Piræus and Orange William—A Parson to the last

THE strangest sporting character I ever met was the late Colonel North, who made a gigantic fortune out of nitrates, but who, so far as I could gather, was not a man with any pretensions to ability. These things happen somehow, and it may be that before I met Colonel North he had some inspiration of genius. Anyhow, he made the money, and everyone ran after him during the nitrate boom, when company after company used to be launched and anyone who could get an allotment of shares was sure of a £2 or £3 premium. Goodness knows how they did it, but the game went on merrily, and the Colonel had London at his feet.

It was in connection with blood stock that I first discovered how deficient he was of reasonable intelligence, though I am well aware that others besides have been successes as business men, and yet shown miserable

weakness in the racing transactions, listening to, or being diverted by, the latest adviser, with unfortunate results.

Colonel North used to have the box on the ground floor in the Epsom stand, which has since been occupied by Mrs Langtry. It was his custom to harangue bookmakers from there at the end of a day's racing, but as to betting with any discretion, I have again and again been present when someone has come up and said, "Colonel, you ought to back this," and he has at once said, "All right, go and put me a 'pony' on."

Then another would come up and say, "This is the one to back," and the Colonel would say, "Go and put me a 'pony' on," and afterwards, while the race was being run, he has more than once said to me, "What was it I backed?" I, naturally, had made no note, and perhaps did not remember. He certainly did not, and I suppose many who backed horses for him in that way did not remember either, if the horses won, but simply collected the money. If the horses lost, the Colonel had, of course, to pay.

The good old Colonel when at Avery Hill, Eltham, with Colonel Sir Alfred Kirby as Acting Colonel of the Tower Hamlets Volunteers, used to have them in camp there for a week every year, and had equipped them with tents, baggage train and all other paraphernalia. The week used to be wound up with sports, for munificent prizes, and once when I happened to arrive there I saw a somewhat inactive journalist defeating several others more inactive than himself.

Just then I met Colonel North, who said: "If you had been here ten minutes earlier you could have won £50"—and I certainly could, for that was the

sum which the Colonel gave as the prize for that race, and even in these later days, I could beat the winner as he then was.

Those functions at Avery Hill were marvellous in their way. Colonel North used to challenge anyone present to run sixty yards, and he would give them five yards. He would always beat them, for he had been a bit of a "pro." in his young days at Leeds, and had all the tricks of starting. I once saw him run against Rutland Barrington and Lionel Brough. Brough had no chance, but Barrington was then an active young man, and Colonel North made one or two false starts, which led to Barrington running the full distance before he knew what had happened, and then when the real start came the Colonel was two or three yards in front of him before he knew where he was, and won easily, with "Lal" Brough distanced.

Those were merry days, for no one troubled much about this or that, but later came a time when Sir Alfred Kirby, who was in his time one of the sheriffs of London, ceased to be Colonel of the Tower Hamlets Volunteers, and Colonel Weatherley, a very different class of man, took on the job. He was a good man, but not accustomed to the Hon. Colonel's habits, and his wife was a lady with no idea of anything of the kind. I shall always remember the last day of the week of the Tower Hamlets Volunteers on that occasion, for the Hon. Colonel having, as usual, offered to give anybody five yards in sixty, was taken on by the new Colonel, who must have been at least twenty years younger. Nevertheless, in the presence of his wife, he was beaten pointless by Colonel North.

I noticed then, as I had done more than once before,

that the older man turned blue in the face after running, and I took upon myself to warn him not to run any more races; but he was not to be warned by anybody, and half-an-hour later, on the lawn where was a band playing and a tent for the dinner of his own guests—of whom I was one—he seized the stately Mrs Weatherley round the waist and, seeing me standing by, whirled her several times round, shouted, "How's that for *The Sportsman?*" and led her speechless with indignation into the tent. Doubtless he made his peace afterwards, for that sort of man always does.

I have many other stories to tell of Colonel North, and it is perhaps not known that he might have won many great races, for he had some especially good fillies, more particularly Lady Hermit and Bonnie Gal. These were really in the top class of their time, but the old Colonel used to take no notice of training condition or trainers' feelings. If he had a crowd of people whom he wished to amuse he would run them down to Newmarket by special and insist on a private meeting, all his stable, fit or unfit, taking part in the various contests. Lady Hermit and Bonnie Gal were ruined in this way. The late Robert Sherwood was driven to distraction by this treatment, but it is a pity that he did not get a veterinary surgeon to report that some of the animals must remain in their stables.

I have often wondered what would have happened to Colonel North had he lived many years longer, for, so far as I know, there never was a more unbusinesslike man, and the enormous new house at Avery Hill was built for him during his absence, with his daughter, in Chile by people to whom he had given an unlimited commission. He tried on his return to contest the

account—a really immense sum—but had no tenable defence, and paid it.

It is wonderful that he lived as long as he did. Half-a-day with him more than sufficed for an ordinary being like myself, and whenever I went to Avery Hill it was on a Sunday morning. There you would always find a big gathering—Mrs North used to complain that she never knew within twenty how many were coming to luncheon and dinner. You would be ushered straight into the billiard-room and provided with whisky and soda, as a matter of course. It was well to take a long time in drinking the first one, for empty glasses were at once replenished. Luncheon came, and then you drank champagne, with such discretion as was possible in trying circumstances. After that, to the billiard-room again, and more whisky and soda. Then, perhaps, half-an-hour outside to see the stud. By that time there would be fifty or sixty guests, and among them John Roberts was always a welcome visitor. On return to the house the billiard-room would again be visited, with its concomitants of whisky and soda, and for the special delectation of those present Colonel North would play exhibition matches against John Roberts, who conceded him 75 in 100. The Colonel almost invariably won, for Roberts showed the most astounding skill in missing strokes by the merest hair's-breadth. I remember wondering why or how this came about, until I once came upon them in the corridor outside, and Roberts was saying: "You must let me send you another slate bed for this table, Colonel North. I can assure you this one put me right off my game!"

"But," replied the Colonel, "I had a new one only six months ago."

"I'm very sorry," said Roberts, "but it's no good now."

"All right," replied Colonel North, elated with victory, "send me another, and I'll beat you on that!"

As I walked past, John Roberts was carefully booking the order.

Some may think this was akin to sharp practice, but I don't think it was really reprehensible, for men like Colonel North was are too tempting for the average man of the world not to turn to advantage, and, after all, John Roberts was worth an occasional slate bed as an exhibition player, even though beaten by Colonel North. To my eye he never showed to more advantage than in his failures to win those games. He would run up a break in ideal fashion when the Colonel was a few points from the finish, and then fail by a marvellous miss to run out, thus leaving his host to win, amid the applause of the spectators.

Presently there would be dinner, with copious champagne once more, and after that more billiard-room and whisky, until you got away.

It must be said for Colonel North that such potations never made him turn a hair, but an ordinary man found a single day under such conditions amply sufficient.

What would have happened in the House of Commons had Colonel North been elected for one of the Leeds divisions as he very nearly was, against the present Lord Gladstone, is amusing to think about. In that election contest he drove a coach about the constituency with Jem Mace on the box seat with him, and he had given Kirkstall Abbey to Leeds. He was beaten by a narrow margin, and doubtless that was all for the best.

None who were present can ever forget the great sale

at Avery Hill, when he decided to offer all his blood stock and all his greyhounds, Mr Tattersall selling the former, Mr Rymill the latter. He went to the expense of having wooden boxes built for the horses in training, and, of course, there was a luncheon tent. To this hundreds—even thousands—of visitors from London repaired, being free lunchers almost one and all, while the few genuine buyers could not get in at all.

I shall never forget that afternoon. At one side of the ring there was a long Humphrey's building, with a bar and unlimited supplies. The rostrum was raised to at least twelve feet high and had to be ascended by steps. Mr Edmund Tattersall was a stately, dignified old gentleman, and even getting up to that box was no easy task for him, but when he got there he little knew what he was in for.

Colonel North, who had just reached a stage when he hated the idea of selling anything, quickly started bidding for the lots himself, and when El Diablo came in, he cried out: "The reserve on this horse is 10,000 guineas!"

Mr Tattersall looked at him indignantly, but all the Colonel added was, turning to the bar: "Hi, there! send Mr Tattersall a whisky and soda!"

Sure enough, one was hoisted up to the rostrum on the end of a pole, but I cannot remember whether Mr Tattersall took it—probably not.

So the sale went on, Colonel North bidding for everything. "Why should not I have a bid?" he cried. And then in regard to one old mare who had been barren for ten years I had a commission to buy her up to fifty guineas for some "crank" who thought he had a specific which could ensure her getting in foal. Here at last,

A Gentleman of observation

thought I, there will be a sale, and as there was no bid I put her in at ten guineas, whereupon Colonel North at once said, "A hundred!" On that I forthwith went to him and said: "Colonel, you'd better let me have this old mare. I can give fifty guineas for her."

"Fifty guineas!" replied he. "I wouldn't take five hundred!"

Naturally no business was done, and meanwhile the luncheon tent and the long bar were thronged. Mrs North went and turned out all the lunchers at about 3 P.M., but the bar building in the later stages recalled memories of Hogarth's pictures. I saw a man lying in a corner with an almost empty whisky jar which he was tilting up into his mouth. It was really horrible to behold, and I am not easily upset by such sights. I don't think Mr Tattersall sold anything, but I trust he charged for all that Colonel North bought in.

Mr Rymill sold the greyhounds on the other side of the ground for good prices, as the Colonel could not be in both places.

One of the most extraordinary characters I have ever met was "Parson" Parkes, who was genuinely in Holy Orders to the end of his life, but after doing his duty in that capacity as Rector of Kettleby, during which period he preached to Mrs Asquith and many others of the Melton crowd, taking for texts such as, "So run that ye may obtain," he being a very knowledgable horseman, and finding his stipend insufficient, after his property in Ireland had ceased to be of value, accepted an offer to go as private trainer to the late Mr Bleackley, one of the proprietors of *The Sporting Chronicle*, and for that gentleman—as long as he lived—a great success was made. After that the Parson had a somewhat "rocky"

time at Epsom and elsewhere, but he was always cheerful and popular, and no matter what was the state of the exchequer he always fed his horses well and on the best.

He was one of the best rough-and-ready platform speakers I ever heard, and invaluable at election times. Often and often have I played second fiddle to him on such occasions. There were few, I think, who realised that, amid his Bohemianism, he kept the instinct of a parson to the last, and not only that, he was a thorough patriot—and when the war came he abandoned all idea of racing, never went to a meeting and never made a bet; but, having secured the patent of a wonderful machine for making horseshoes, got himself financed by a bank, broke through all opposition at the War Office, and obtained from Lord Kitchener an order to produce as many horse and mule shoes as he possibly could. A great feature in obtaining the contract was that the Parson, having lived some two years in Belgium, understood the people, and had been able to get a large number of Belgian workers. This was a novelty at the time, when Belgians were being kept here for nothing. There came a later period, when unskilled British operators had got to understand the work, and Labour agitators had got at the Belgians, who were by that time making as much as £8 a week, with the result that they demanded improved conditions and threatened to strike.

Then Parson Parkes, being sure of his British substitutes, reported the Belgians to their authorities in London, and they were all conscripted forthwith and taken away to the front.

He continued making horse and mule shoes, night and day, to the end of the war and six weeks afterward, and during that time he came into business connection

with Mr Dickson of steel fame. For him, as soon as the war was over, he set about training horses once more, and made good with Piræus and Orange William, both of whom I was the means of sending into their stable. But poor Parkes did not last long. An attack of pneumonia, after being at Salisbury Races on a cold day, carried him off, and Mr Dickson had to carry on as best he could.

Probably there is no one of any account on the Turf who did not know Parson Parkes and was not pleased to hear his hearty laugh. It is impossible to conceive that he ever had an enemy, though he gave short shrift to such chance opponents as he came up against—as once, for instance, in a billiard-room at Epsom.

Though he was all things to all men, he nevertheless was a true parson to the end. In one of his later years, when there was a dinner at a British Empire Club in Piccadilly, with Lord Curzon as the principal speaker and all the necessary surroundings, including a pompous toast-master, there was no parson present but Parson Parkes, and as someone had to say grace there came forth in stentorian tones:

"PRAY, SILENCE, FOR THE REV. A. W. PARKES!"

Good old Parkes, of course, did the needful—there never was any humbug about him in such matters—but the contrast between him and Lord Curzon dwells in my memory.

Parson Parkes was a man who had obtained degrees at both Dublin and Durham universities—First Class in one of them—and that reminds me of a time when I went up from Newmarket to London, during a December sale, to vote in the Strand Division, and get back in time to speak. I had six or seven mares to sell

in the morning, just caught a train, voted, dined at the club, and found an indignant member, who showed me a letter in *The Daily News* of that day, which purported to be signed by a member of my own club. There had been a discussion as to the political prevalence of Members of Parliament who had been "at Balliol under Jowett" —Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, Mr Asquith, etc.—but this letter said that "a feeling of nausea would be produced" when it was known that Mr William Allison, Honorary Secretary of The Sporting League, had also been at Balliol under Jowett, and had graduated in a First Class.

Armed with this *Daily News*, I had no difficulty at all, on return to Newmarket, about my speech, following Parson Parkes at the Conservative Club, for it was a mere commonplace to illustrate the lengths to which our opponents were carrying class distinctions. Here was a humble being like myself held up to odium for having obtained a First Class in an examination! Why, my friend Mr Parkes had also obtained a First Class in his day, and as for the present company, I thought we were all first class, and our opponents of no class! That went down well, and Parkes used to recount it to the end of his life.

The strange thing is that the man whose name was signed to the letter in *The Daily News* denied having written it, and the paper had to apologise for its publication.

CHAPTER XXIV

GREAT HANDICAP HORSES

Handicapping by Weight unsatisfactory—Great Weight-Carriers not necessarily Great—Instance Bendigo—On the contrary, Minting—The White Knight and Willonyx below Classic Form—Air Raid—Isonomy—Minting and St Simon at 10 st. 7 lb. each—Would the better Horse have won?—Count Mokronoski and Carlton—Sheen and Sterling—Strange Theory about Young Gouty—Time Test, its Uses and Abuses—The Puzzle of it—English Courses inaccurately measured—Instance of the Goodwood Cup Course

I HAVE always thought that the system of handicapping by weight is a very futile one for arriving at the real racing merit of horses, unless we wish to test them solely as weight-carriers, which may, perhaps, be a reasonable idea. No one would ever dream of handicapping pedestrians in such a way, but, of course, it would be impracticable to have a field of horses starting from different marks. Weighting them is, I take it, the only way, but it leads to certain animals gaining a great reputation for no other reason than that they were able to win under heavy weights. There is a great gulf fixed between any such reputation and that of the really highest class horse.

There have been class horses, such as Julius, Robert the Devil and St Gatien, who were also weight-carriers, as they proved in the Cesarewitch, but there have been many distinguished weight-carriers who were anything but class horses, and gained their distinction simply by their ability to carry weight.

Bendigo was one of these, for, within reasonable limits, weight had no effect on him, and in handicaps he was almost invincible, but he was no sort of use to Ormonde and Minting at weight-for-age. It is alleged that he was not well when he met those celebrities at Ascot, but such excuses must always be taken *cum grano*, etc. Bendigo was, beyond question, a good horse, but his reputation was gained by his ability to carry big weights.

As a class horse who was also a weight-carrier Minting stands out, for he won the Jubilee Handicap at Kempton, running away with 10 st. in the saddle, and as Mat. Dawson went with him to the paddock gate, after weighing in, I said to him: "He'd have won with another stone, Mr Dawson." "He would indeed!" was the answer, and no one who saw that race could doubt it.

Minting was a horse well up to 16 st. to hounds, and weight was of no use whatever in measuring him with horses of less weight-carrying physique.

Yet in the matter of class he was himself outclassed by Ormonde, who was, perhaps, an equally good weight-carrier, though he was never tested as Minting was at Kempton.

The clearest proofs of what I mean are furnished by The White Knight and Willonyx, neither of whom was a really first-class horse, though their performances under heavy weights induced people to think them so. The White Knight came near to winning the Cesarewitch with 9 st. 12 lb., and Willonyx did actually win it with 9 st. 5 lb. in the saddle. These were great performances, but neither horse was anything like the best of his year. The White Knight never saw the way

that Spearmint went in the Derby, and though Willonyx won the Ascot Cup it was only because Charles O'Malley would not struggle—and even he was no wonder.

I think, perhaps, the greatest exponent of weight-carrying ability, while lacking class, was Foxhall—I write only of horses within my own experience. Bend Or gave him tons of weight in the City and Suburban and beat him, but he won the Cesarewitch, and then went on to win the Cambridgeshire under 9 st. as a three-year-old, simply because he was a powerful weight-carrier who could claim no great pretensions to class. He won the Ascot Cup the next year against poor opposition, but was readily defeated for the Alexandra Plate by Fiddler, who was also of native American ancestry.

It is very easy to be carried away by these handicap fancies, and I myself succumbed to such a feeling after the really splendid victory of Willonyx in the Cesarewitch, and arranged a syndicate of breeders to fill him for three years at 300 guineas, and buy him for 30,000 guineas, but Mr Howard would not sell. We were all carried away by a splendid handicap performance, and forgot that Willonyx had nothing like such a record against the best of his year at weight-for-age. Rosedrop, the winner of the Oaks, carried a penalty at York and beat him over a mile and a half, thus earmarking his weight-for-age form as by no means top class.

Air Raid won the Cesarewitch as a three-year-old with 8 st. 1 lb., and this performance was equal to that of his sire, Willonyx, for Air Raid was a three-year-old. Nevertheless he was by no means in the same class as the best of his year as represented by Gainsborough. He was a good one, of course, and a true stayer, like

his sire, or he could not have won, but it was weight-carrying power that got him home and gained him his pre-eminence. He is now at Mr W. Young's stud in Uruguay and is, I hear, in very great favour.

Handicapping by weight has always seemed to me to be a most fallacious test since we saw the three-year-olds See Saw and Blue Gown finish first and second for the Cambridgeshire carrying 8 st. 2 lb. and 9 st. respectively. See Saw was the better weight-carrier of the two, but neither was conspicuous in that way, and Blue Gown certainly did not stand more than 15·2½ h.h. It is all very well to say that action carries weight, and those two carried it in that race, but one like Minting would have packed another stone and lost them, nor would this have been any proof of superior class.

Among horses of no great size who have carried big weights successfully in handicaps, Isonomy is conspicuous. In the matter of his size, John Porter once told me that when Isonomy was sent to Kingsclere, as a yearling, he was instructed to train him for early races as he was never likely to do much good later on. However, as we know, Isonomy thickened and became robust, though he was never a big one, and he certainly illustrated the maxim that "action carries weight." He was, in fact, a wonder in that respect; but I have always doubted whether he was really a horse of the best classic form.

John Porter, like all trainers who have had many great horses through their hands, would sometimes incline to Isonomy, but not often. He would branch off into preference for Rosicrucian, who was really his idol, and then jump on to Ormonde, Orme and Flying

Fox. None of these great trainers ever knew what was their really best, any more than I do, who have seen them all; but the solid fact remains that Isonomy established a line which will certainly be permanent, and has already done immense good to the British thoroughbred.

His sire, Sterling, was another horse whose reputation was gained chiefly in handicaps — and a grand individual he was—but he was not in the top class as a weight-for-age horse, and was beaten by Bothwell for the Two Thousand Guineas. Bothwell afterwards went wrong in his wind, but he was no wonder anyway, and Sterling, though a great weight-carrier in handicaps, did not really stay beyond a mile.

That he was a remarkably good horse I know, having much information from his earliest trainer; but the fact remains that he excelled as a weight-carrier in handicaps, and was not really brilliant at weight-for-age. It may seem sacrilege to write of Sterling in this fashion, but all the same it is mere truth.

Until Willonyx won the Cesarewitch, with 9 st. 5 lb., the record for that race was held by Sheen, who, in 1890, carried 9 st. 2 lb. to victory, and no one will claim that Sheen was a horse fit to rank with good classic winners. He was a fine, strong-backed stayer and the weight did not seriously trouble him.

I have no manner of doubt that St Simon would have beaten Minting at ordinary racing weights of 9 st. each, one mile, but the result would have been different if the conditions were 10 st. 7 lb. each, for Minting was well able to carry such a weight at racing pace, while St Simon would have been overloaded.

A fine weight-carrier, without serious pretensions to

class, was Carlton, who won the Manchester November Handicap over the old course in 1887, with 9 st. 12 lb. in the saddle. That was a record which has not been approached since then — Ravensbury, 1894, and St Maclou, 1902, coming nearest to it, with 9 st. 4 lb. each.

Many of us remember Carlton's owner, Count Mokronoski, a garrulous old sportsman, with many quaint ideas, one of which was that puffiness or gumminess of joints betokened a horse's descent from Young Gouty, on whom that name, in his opinion, was bestowed because his knees or other joints were affected in a manner similar to the legs and feet of gouty old gentlemen, who at that period were very numerous. I think it was in reference to Old Petronel that he first propounded to me this remarkable theory. Certainly Petronel was puffy about his knees and joints, and he transmitted this fault to some of his stock, as also did other horses, but it needs rather a stretch of imagination to assume that Young Gouty (foaled in 1805) was *caput horum et causa malorum*, or that he received his name for any such reason as that which Count Mokronoski alleged. The eccentric old Count thought no end of Carlton, whom he eventually sold to his friend Prince Lubomirski, for, I think, 5000 guineas, and the horse finished his stud career in Poland.

I cannot recall that he ever had any success at the stud in England, except when he sired Kozak, who did Sir Claude de Crespigny many a good turn.

Some people attach undue importance to the time-test as proving the merit or demerit of horses, and certainly since Sloan taught English jockeys how to ride races as races all the way much more can be learned from the time than used to be the case; but it

is absurd in England to compare the times made on one race-course with those made on another. On the Epsom 5 furlongs, for instance, they make world's records every time, while on the Rous course at Newmarket they never get under 60 seconds. Time is valuable as a proof whether a race has been truly run or not, and that is its great value in the case of a trial; but the one stumbling-block as regards time is that it shows little or no difference between bad horses and good. Thus, at Epsom, last spring we saw the Ashtead Selling Plate won by Contact, over 6 furlongs, in 1 minute 9⅘ seconds, while the next race, the Woodcote Stakes, over the same distance, was won by Re-echo, who took 1 minute 10⅕ seconds to cover the course. The Selling Plater, Far Isle, won the Ranmore Plate, 5 furlongs, in 56⅘ seconds, and this is within a fraction of record—even for Epsom. The same difficulty arises over timing men. Thus the very best runners rarely make even time for 100 yards, though it is quite common for even boys at school to get within a fraction or two of that time, and yet the real champion sprinters would run right away from such boys were they to meet in a race. It is difficult to account for this, for it is clear that, in this last-mentioned contingency, either the champions would make better time than they had ever done before or the boys would make worse time than they had already done.

In the case of horses we face the same puzzle, and though some races are difficult to time accurately, there are very many that can be timed to a fraction, as, for instance, the 1½ miles at Epsom, or the Doncaster St Leger course.

An element of uncertainty in timing English races is

introduced by the fact that the reputed distances are in very many cases incorrect. This applies to nearly all round courses, which are measured along the middle of the track and not, as they should be, a few feet from the rails, as at Epsom. Besides, at Ascot in particular a lot of new ground was made, which cut off a good deal of the distance at the top turn. That was before the 1902 meeting, and so far as I am aware no corresponding difference was made in the starting posts.

Thus it is that three out of the world's records over 2 miles were made at Ascot, and all three are better than the fourth, which was 3 minutes 25 seconds, at Wellington, New Zealand.

The simple explanation of this is that the Ascot 2 miles is not a genuine 2 miles, and just in the same way, and for the same reason, we find two 1½ mile records out of three made on round courses in England, Manchester and Newbury. There are six world's records for 5 furlongs, and they were all made at Epsom. These curious details serve to show us that times made in England cannot reasonably be brought into comparison with those made abroad, where tracks are properly measured and the distances assured.

An instance of the inaccuracy of English measurements was furnished a good many years ago when the Goodwood Cup course was always stated to be 2 miles 4 furlongs. I repeatedly published my conviction that it was a longer distance than this, because the winner always took from 15 to 20 seconds more than did the winner of the Ascot Cup, and Torpoint—an extraordinary stayer—ran better for the Goodwood than for the Ascot Cup.

Eventually the Duke of Richmond and Gordon had

the Cup course carefully measured, and it proved to be 2 miles 5½ furlongs. It is now described as about 2 miles 5 furlongs. Naturally, such a distance as that is a law unto itself as regards time, and does not bear useful comparison with any other.

The subject is not a very exhilarating one, but it is of some importance, and as I have given considerable study to it I venture to interpolate some few of my views.

CHAPTER XXV

LATTER-DAY OWNERS

James Lowther at Battersea—The Three Rothschilds—"Mr Leopold" and his Benefactions—The Vyners—Mr Houldsworth—Prince Soltykoff—The Duke of Westminster—Lord Falmouth—Mr Arthur James

I MUST be coming somewhere near the end of my allotted space, but I cannot forbear to recall some of the owners, beyond reproach, who have passed from us during the last thirty years.

There was not one for whom I had a more really genuine liking than Mr James Lowther, who, though he never had any great horses—Workington being about the best—was devoted absolutely to the interests of sport, and the Turf in particular, throwing himself heart and soul into any and every fight in defence of the good cause. In the palmy days of the Sporting League I could always depend on him to attend public meetings in any part of the country, and even in the East End of London or in hostile Battersea he never flinched from opposition. There was something about him so delightfully true that even the most rabid opponents never became offensive, but would try to guy a meeting by shouting, "Give us a tip for the Ebor!"—or whatever big race was impending. So, too, in Parliament, Mr Lowther was never weary in well-doing, when anti-gambling or other spoil-sport Bills had to be blocked. He was a terror to evildoers in that direction. More-

over, he was one of the hardest working Jockey Club stewards we have ever known, and I should say he was certainly one of the most popular.

Years before, in the Fenian days, he had been Irish Secretary, and John Corlett used always to declare that he was the most capable occupant of that office who had ever been known. So he passed on, leaving, I think, not a single enemy, amid the respect of all and the love of many.

Hardly second to him in my estimation was the late Mr Leopold de Rothschild, one of the kindest and best of men, whom, with his brothers, Lord Rothschild and "Mr Alfred," I knew for a good many years before I was on *The Sportsman.*

A certain amount of imagery is attached to the Rothschild breed of blood stock, from the importance attached to it by Lord Beaconsfield, and his advice to Lady Bradford that her husband should follow on similar lines. "The Daughter of the Star" was a true Disraeli name and it will hold good just as will his. I stayed at Ascott as long ago as 1891, when the present Mr Anthony de Rothschild was a very small boy, and I had with me John Beer the artist. I know we were very well received, and went to see the hounds in their kennel next morning, but what came of it all I don't remember, for the paper of that period for which we did these things was *Black and White,* now extinct.

But as for Mr Leopold, he was a wonder, and when he had established a system at his stud for rearing colts in separate paddocks, as the Duke of Westminster always did at Eaton, he at once produced St Frusquin, Galeazzo and Gulistan, each one of whom was good enough to win an average Derby, though Persimmon prevented any of

them from doing it. Galeazzo was actually successful as understudy to St Frusquin for the Newmarket Stakes, and left his principal fresh for the Derby.

Mr Leopold de Rothschild was the most unselfish of men, and one who always wished to do good to others; but he was most careful not to be taken in by bogus claims.

I often had a message from him inquiring what I knew about some impecunious person who had gone to him for assistance, and if I was able to say that the case was worthy of assistance the assistance always came.

I cannot explain the position better than this—that once there was a couple past middle age who—or at least he—had occupied a big position under the Marquis of Hastings, of unfortunate renown.

They were beat to the world financially, and the lady came to me at the December sales one year, asking me if I could get up a subscription for them without mentioning their names. This, of course, was a dreadful job to undertake, and I told her there were only two men in the world whom I could ask to subscribe money on such terms. I did not tell her who they were, but I wrote to them both, and they were Sir Tatton Sykes and Mr Leopold de Rothschild. The former sent me £50 and Mr Leopold sent £25, so that these people had £75 as a Christmas present; but I always felt unhappy at having done this thing, even though it was with people who could not possibly suspect me. The infinite goodness of Mr Leopold de Rothschild was demonstrated later on when the lady—to whom I had given the names of their secret benefactors—went and got another £10 out of him direct.

He communicated with me at once, and I replied that

I was glad to be relieved of any pledge of secrecy as to her name. Good old Sir Tatton had gone to his rest without ever knowing it, but, bless his soul, he wouldn't mind that.

I had points of difference with "Mr Leopold," for I never could quite like his Derby winner, St Amant, and when the colt won the Jockey Club Stakes as a four-year-old he did not forget to call my attention to the victory. Nevertheless St Amant was nothing like so good a horse as his sire, St Frusquin, but his breeding is unimpeachable and comprises practically all the best that the Rothschild breeding studs have ever produced.

"Mr Leopold" was never happy if his friends had no share in any success that he had gained. "I hope you backed my horse!" he would always say to them after a victory.

Next to St Frusquin the really best horse he ever bred was Radium, and he too has in the last few years made thoroughly good as a stallion. But, in any case, the Rothschild taproots of high-class stock—viz. Parma and Daughter of the Star—will hold on for many long years to come, and recall not merely Disraeli and Coningsby but the good man of whom I have been writing.

Other good men whom I must mention are the brothers H. F. C. and Robert Vyner, both of whom I knew, and, in earlier days, their younger brother, who was killed by Greek brigands. Mr H. F. C. and Mr Robert Vyner were in the Newby Ferry disaster when hunting with the York and Ainsty, and escaped.

Mint Sauce, by Young Melbourne, was the property of Mr Clare Vyner, who bred The Lambkin, winner of the St Leger, from her; but Mr Robert Vyner was owner in the later part of her life and bred Minting and

Minthe from her, the latter being a Thousand Guineas winner.

Robert Vyner long survived his brother, and he had the Fairfield Stud, with Minting and other stallions there for many years. His factotum in the later days was Wharton Watson, a strange character, who in earlier times was known as "The Yorkshire Spendthrift," from his frequent residences in York Castle; but he got on well with Mr Vyner, and after the exuberance of youth he was, I dare say, as staid and sensible as most of us.

Robert Vyner never bred anything really good after Minting and Minthe, and the big horse was very disappointing after he had led off so brilliantly with Minting Queen. It was not for lack of good mares from public breeders, and there were many rarely bred ones at the home stud, such as those of "Parson" King's Manganese family, through Agility—as good a little mare as ever ran. I saw her beat Rosicrucian fairly and squarely one year for the York Cup, though she was disqualified.

Somehow or other nothing very great could be done with this breed, and Crowberry, who hunted Ayrshire home for the Derby, was the best horse that Mr R. C. Vyner ever bred from it. He was, however, intensely interested in breeding, and the last time I ever saw him, which was when we lunched in a restaurant car on the Great Northern Railway, he talked on no other subject. He had sent mares to The Victory and had plenty of initiative in his ideas, being by no means a slave of fashion.

He had also in his stud a favourite line from the famous mare by Underhand out of the Slayer's Daughter

(ancestress of Man o' War). His mare of the breed was Fabiola, by Martyrdom, and a good one she was.

Brennan, who was stud groom to Mr Clare Vyner, and afterwards to Mr James Lowther and Mr Robert Vyner in succession, was at one time with Viney, who trained the half-breds for Lord Feversham, such as Queen of Diamonds, etc. He is still alive and has several times travelled with blood stock for me to Australia and elsewhere. He even did his bit in the war, in the horse department, though goodness knows how old he is—older than I am, at any rate.

Mr Houldsworth and Prince Soltykoff were two of the great Turf standbys whom we have lost. The former was a very staunch sportsman, and, like all the good old sort, stood by his old trainer, James Ryan, to the last. He secured the best of the Sunshine breed after the death of Mr Merry, and though he and Ryan never worked it into its full value, yet in combination with Springfield it developed into an absolutely priceless line of blood.

Prince Soltykoff, too, though he enjoyed many successes during his long career, never bred anything so good as Hurry On, who comes from the line of blood which he had cultivated for years and years. A curious man was the old Prince, and to some extent a relic of the strange mid-century days, which George Hodgman's book so accurately records. Still more strange was Professor Catterall, who used to be veterinary adviser and general agent for the old Prince in most of the affairs of his life. When I last saw Prince Soltykoff I drove down to the race-course at Newmarket with him and he then assured me that Thurio was undoubtedly by Tibthorpe—not Cremorne

—and that Tibthorpe was a roarer when he was a foal.

One of the greatest figures in the last decade of the nineteenth century was the Duke of Westminster, and I shall always remember him as a most kindly gentleman, though a somewhat arbitrary Duke.

His reputation as a breeder came to him almost by chance, for it was by the merest chance, and not by his own design, that he became possessed of Doncaster, who got Bend Or for him in his first stud season. That was the foundation of the sire line; but the Duke did not care about Doncaster and sold him to go to Austria-Hungary. Bend Or remained a sa tower of strength and sired Ormonde and Kendal in his first stud season. The Duke thought well of Ormonde for one year at the stud when he got Orme, Goldfinch and other good ones. After the horse had suffered badly from pneumonia the following season, and only sired one foal out of a full list of mares, his Grace decided to let him "leave his country for his country's good"—on the ground of his being a roarer, it was said—but *Credat Judæus!*—or why was Orme installed as principal stallion at the Eaton stud?

More accidental successes followed, for Vampire would not have been mated with Orme had she not been such a savage mare that they dared not send her away from home. The Duke had even ordered her to be shot, when she ran open-mouthed at him, as he was looking at her over her box door, and made him start back and lose his hat. Nevertheless she produced Flying Fox to Orme and that gave the Duke his final triumph.

He had two priceless mares—Angelica, sister to St Simon, and dam of Orme; and Ornament, sister to

Ormonde, and dam of Sceptre, Collar, Labrador and other great winners; but he did not really like either of these mares and sold all their stock, with the exception of Orme. I myself bought from him three daughters of Angelica.

Thus, it may be seen that the Duke of Westminster owed his fortune on the Turf more to good luck than to any heaven-born instinct of his own; for had not Doncaster been more or less thrust on him by Robert Peck, after the horse had been refused by the old Cobham Stud Company, it is questionable whether the Duke would ever have figured at all on the Turf, to any appreciable extent. Still it must be admitted that most of us owe such successes as we gain to some initial accident, and in that sense the Duke of Westminster was certainly entitled to his fame.

Of less distinction on the Turf, because to some extent he was overshadowed by the memory of his famous father, the late Viscount Falmouth was one of the best of men and most genuine of sportsmen. No one who knew him could fail to appreciate this; and in his unobtrusive way he continued to breed on the old lines and with some additions—one of which produced Quintessence and her sons, Clarissimus and Paragon. Lord Falmouth did good work as a Steward of the Jockey Club, and he was a gallant soldier in his day. Willie Waugh, who trained for him, never, I think, had an employer to whom he was so thoroughly attached. It was Willie Waugh who got me to go down and see the stud and write about it before the final sale; also to take Amadis and keep him for a season at Cobham, with a view to making a sale of him in July. All this was done by him, without any idea of personal

advantage on his part, but just for love of the good man who was gone and to serve the family who remained.

The sale of the mares, foals and yearlings was a great success, and I remember thinking it would have been wiser to put Amadis up at that time; but all turned out for the best, as we managed to bring Amadis into greater notoriety that season than he had ever enjoyed since he quitted the Turf, sent him to Newmarket sales in ideal condition, and there the Duke of Westminster bought him for 3500 guineas. Had he not made over 3000 guineas he was to have remained at Cobham.

The late Mr Arthur James must also be named in these memoirs, for him, too, I knew well—as one knows people on the Turf—and in his quiet way he was an excellent Jockey Club Steward. Moreover, he had an open mind in the matter of blood-stock breeding, and several times sent mares, at my request, to what might be deemed, and indeed were, outlandish horses—such as Merman and Great Scot. Merman got Duma for him, and Great Scot got At Last, one of the best little mares, for her inches, that we have seen for many a year.

Then again when I had bred a filly for the special purpose of "making" Cornstalk, her sire, and had let Richard Wootton have her for 50 guineas, knowing that he believed in Cornstalk (son of Trenton and Glare), and would give her a chance, he proceeded to win two races with her and sold her to Mr James, who soon won two more races with her and shortly afterwards took her out of training. I asked Mr James at Ascot why he had not given her a chance over a longer course, and he said: "She is so beautifully bred that I

bought her for the paddock, and didn't want to knock her about with much racing."

This was a nice hearing for me, who was at that time labouring to make breeders believe in Cornstalk. I asked Mr James, "If this filly is so 'beautifully bred,' can you not send a mare to her sire?" But he said he had never thought of that. Mr Arthur James was a real loss to the Turf. Mrs Arthur James fortunately remains, and long may she do so. The Cornstalk filly whom I have just mentioned is named Lady Dan, and has bred several winners, such as Daniella, but nothing so good as would come from a horse of Carbine descent, which mating I am confident I should have persuaded Mr Arthur James to adopt had he lived. The combination of Carbine and Trenton with abundance of fast blood can hardly fail.

CHAPTER XXVI

OTHER TIMES, OTHER MANNERS

Great Changes in Football—Association unknown in the Sixties—Rugby as it then was—Cricket perennial—Dalton on Bridge—First Notice at the Rutland Arms, Newmarket—My Surprise—Dalton still the Authority—My own Incapacity—Horrible Names of Rugby and Association Football—Croquet Past and Present—Bowls—Golf—The Filey Course—Convoys—Marbles

NOTHING is more remarkable to anyone who lives a long time than the change which comes over the tastes of the public as regards sports and games during that period. I have tried my best to keep abreast of the times, and in some respects have succeeded, but not in others. Thus, as already told in another book, Rugby football, when I was at school there, was practically unknown, except at Rugby, and the Association game had not loomed above the horizon at all. That vast crowds of the public would ever become madly enthusiastic over watching football had never at that period occurred to the mind of man. Cricket was a perennial attraction, and it still remains as the cleanest and best, having never at any time developed into an attractive medium for betting; but football, which in popularity is but of mushroom growth, has gained a quite enormous vogue, and, it is safe to say, is more largely attended by crowds of people, and more considerably speculated on, than are the very greatest race meetings.

Now this is all mystery to me, for on this point the march of time has beaten me. I suppose one ought to be ashamed to confess to absolute ignorance of even the elementary rules of Association football, and I have never watched a game for more than ten minutes, for the play conveyed no impression to my mind.

Of course it must be a great game, or it would not attract so many people, but it is one of the attractions of life that I have wholly missed.

More remarkable still to me is the craze for bridge. I used to be a fairly good whist player, many years ago, and shall never forget one morning in the bar of the Rutland Arms, during a Newmarket Meeting, when Mr Dalton, a son-in-law of the late Mr John Hammond (owner of St Gatien and Florence), came in and gave me a little book, which, he said, explained a game that was going to supersede whist. Would I make some mention of the book in *The Sportsman*?

I readily agreed to do so, but, I am sure Mr Dalton will forgive me when I say that I did not then regard him as a man of such revolutionary capacity.

Rather, having regard to our then surroundings, I thought it must be a variant of solo whist, or some other such game, in which the racing crowd takes speculative pleasure. I wrote the notice, and the book I wrote about was the original of *Dalton on Bridge.* What I wrote I don't in the least remember, but I must have read some part of the book in order to write a notice of it. Mr Dalton's prophecy to me on that occasion proved to be extraordinarily true; for bridge has absolutely expelled whist, which latter is now an almost unknown game. *Dalton on Bridge* is still

the standard authority, and he himself remains as the high priest of this new cult.

Yet here again, whether it be from old age or rank Toryism—probably the latter—I have never been able to persuade myself to master even the rudiments of bridge; and, on the whole, I am not sorry, for one sees so many people who are so obsessed by the game that they seem to have no interest in anything else. Such people, on a sea voyage, for instance, which to me is a source of continuous pleasure, are bored to death if they cannot make up a bridge party. They have no other idea; and I find that ignorance of the game is a most useful safeguard, when they come and ask you to make up a fourth. To say you are a bad player is no sufficient excuse, but to be able to say that you don't know how to play—which is quite true in my case—is conclusive, and you can then resume reading your novel or playing quoits or writing—or doing whatever you fancy. Beyond bridge the bridge players seem to fancy nothing.

As in the case of Association football so in the case of bridge, my lack of appreciation must be imputed to me for some deficiency of progress with the times. I fully accept that position; for it would be absurd to claim any sort of standpoint against the march of obvious public opinion of a later growth.

I think I was put off football through well knowing how it became called by names of such really foul origin as "Rugger" and "Soccer"—portmanteau words, invented by a young fool at Oxford when *Through the Looking Glass* had recently been published.

The unsuspecting public are unaware of this now, and even the Prince of Wales, when at Oxford, was

called the "Pragger Wagger," little knowing the source of the combination, which the word "Rugger" ought to make plain to the most obtuse understanding.

I write of that which I know beyond all doubt on this point, and it ought surely not to be too late even now to save football from being defiled by such names.

I may not take interest in Association football myself, but that is nothing—a vast number of my fellow-countrymen do. In their interests I venture to protest against the really disgraceful name of "Soccer."

As to Rugby football, which I used to rejoice in at the old school, and had my Cap there—well, I like seeing Rugby football now, though the rules are very different; but it comes as an awful shock to me to hear it spoken of as "Rugger"—especially when an innocent woman so describes it.

The football authorities ought really to take action and expurgate these horrid names. There is no other epithet to suit them.

Originally the trick of such names was almost childish and in that sense inoffensive. Thus one of my still living contemporaries at Oxford, named Wilson, became known as "Wigger"; but surely it is not unreasonable to protest against a game in which the populace is so much interested being desecrated by such names as have been unwittingly adopted.

I have purposely written somewhat freely on the above subject, and I do hope that, in my humble sphere, I may have done something to relieve what is, no doubt, a noble and splendid game from the evil incubus that has been mixed up with its name. What should we think if some fool proposed to call cricket "Crigger"? It would be equally correct, according to the same

portmanteau scheme of words; but I suppose the origin of the trouble has passed out of memory, though *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and the portmanteau words never will. All the same, I pray the football authorities to think and inquire into this question, which is really a crying scandal to those who understand it, and let them make the names of "Rugger" and "Soccer" "taboo" for evermore. It may be difficult to do so without some very serious and definite official pronouncement.

There are other games which, curiously enough, the march of time has revived. Croquet was a ridiculous game in the period of John Leech's *Punch* illustrations, but shortly after that time it was developed in scientific form and I and a few others used to play it with the narrow hoops, large mallets and very much the same setting of hoops as at present.

We attained to considerable scientific merit in laying out, breaks and all that. Many a time did I in those days—the early seventies—go round the ground in one break, and, in practice, I once went three times round, the ground not being quite so large as now, but the hoops equally narrow.

Then came a time when croquet was forgotten for fifteen or twenty years, and suddenly it was revived.

I watched some of the new champions playing and could not detect that they had improved at all on the old time. In fact, when I had a croquet ground laid out at Cobham, I found that I could hold my own easily with the new generation, and that they had not advanced one iota in the science of the game as I knew it. The trouble was that I could seldom find anyone to play a serious game with me, and ultimately I took to playing four ball games against myself, which often had remark-

able results, for I could always play one side conscientiously against the other.

Croquet, however, is a selfish sort of game and not worth looking at unless someone is really playing well. I mention it only to suggest that I can play it to this day, and that the modern players have made little or no progress.

There are, of course, other old games in which the interest never flags, and one of these is bowls, in which the oldest of us can take pleasure, but perhaps the best of them, for all ages and conditions of men, is golf. This for the purpose of taking admirable exercise, while you are hardly conscious of doing so, is quite unrivalled, certainly for middle-aged and old people. Even I have played for a week during the last year on the Hindhead Course, and those who have ever done so know what desperate hill-climbing that means. So, too, I have, a few years ago, played for several weeks at Sidmouth, and occasionally carried my own clubs for eighteen holes. That also is a severe hill-side effort, and I mention these small incidents as showing how completely the mind rises superior to matter when you are playing golf. I could, I suppose, in a dour sort of way, carry a bag of golf clubs up and down hill for five miles, but I should be badly tired before I got to the end. When you are playing golf, however, you can do this and be absolutely unconscious of fatigue. You can do it morning and afternoon—even I can. Young people can carry on all day.

Pray, let no one imagine that I am posing as a golf player—for there are probably few worse—but I am just wanting to point out the advantage you can get from playing, however badly.

My first experience of golf was at Filey, some twenty years ago, and a delightful course that is, on the South Cliff, with the sea in full view and a most perfect air, teeming with ozone. Beck, the professional, is a right good man, and there is no better teacher. There, in war time, one saw the convoys go past morning and afternoon, and there were many stirring incidents, for submarines were busy in those waters.

It seems like a dream now to recall those convoys as they passed, with an airship scouting in front and destroyers on either side, but you so soon get used to almost anything that golf would be resumed after a brief inspection of the convoy.

There is a ravine to drive over at Filey, and the first time I ever played I had the full confidence of a novice and carried well over it with complete success, but not the second time, nor for many times afterwards. Golf appears to me to be a game dependent almost entirely on temperament and nerves. For instance, in the few lessons I have had I could do whatever I was told to do. Beck would put down half-a-dozen balls, with caddies to field them, and with a driver, or an iron, or a mashie, as the case might be. I was supposed to hit them, and, in such circumstances, never failed to do so with absolute ease, but there is a great gulf fixed between that sort of thing and playing in a game—especially driving off from the first tee with a lot of people looking at you. Still, be all that as it may, golf is one of the best of all games, if you can only find a course that is not too popular, which seems to be really impossible in the neighbourhood of London.

In my earliest days it was not unusual to play marbles, though I never attained to any proficiency at that game,

nor do I see any reason to regret its having passed into desuetude, though Serjeant Buzfuz alluded pathetically to it in the case of Bardell *v.* Pickwick. It was a harmless game, but must have been in some sense objectionable, or undergraduates would not have been forbidden by ancient University statute to play it on the steps of their colleges. The same statutes, however, had a headline—

EQUORUM CURSUS PROHIBITUS

—and that seems to condemn the framers of the whole code as imbeciles beyond redemption.

CHAPTER XXVII

MEMINISSE JUVABIT

The late Lord and Lady Londonderry—Sir George Wombwell—Newburgh Priory and Wynyard—Corcyra—The Lascelles Family—Lord Harewood and Pentecost—Cantilever's Cambridgeshire—John Burns and the Sporting League—His Challenge and its Consequences—The Ailesbury Duck and the Moated Grange—*Dolly: A Love Story*—A Laughable "Little Episode"—Abington Baird

NEARING the end of this rigmarole, I feel disinclined to bid good-bye to the memories of many dear, good people whom I have known, and to whose merits I am so little able to do justice. I have already written of many of them, but some were almost too good to be dealt with hastily. For example, the late Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry, both of whom died all too soon. I often wonder whether he did not derive fatal damage from a visit they paid to Cobham a year or so before his death, as it was desperately bad weather at the time. They made a point of seeing many of the mares, and indeed bought one, named Christie Johnstone, which was afterwards renamed Christie. After that visit Lord Londonderry had an attack of pneumonia. He recovered, but may have suffered permanent damage.

Casting back, I think I first saw Lord Londonderry when I was hunting from Oxford and he was at one of the meets of the Bicester with his friend, Lord Helmsley,

of whom I have written earlier in this book. Later on I often met him with the York and Ainsty, Hurworth, Bedale and other hounds, and at one time it seemed hardly probable that we should be good friends, for I was somewhat reckless in those days and had written a rather severe "skit" on Sir George Wombwell in *The Sporting Times*, the cause being that two or three of Lord Middleton's hounds had been poisoned while hunting at Newburgh. There was really no question about it. There was going to be a Royal visit to Newburgh, and pheasants were wanted in abundance, regardless of foxes. The incident is doubtless remembered by old people in that neighbourhood, and as I made no secret of having written what *The Sporting Times* published, Lord Londonderry, who was a friend of Sir George Wombwell, had some "words" with me about it in the hunting field; but in those days "words" passed like water off a duck's back, and though Sir George Wombwell and I never spoke to one another for seven or eight years afterwards, he eventually made friendly overtures, and all was well. I am glad of this, for I can hardly think that a man who had been Master of the York and Ainsty until a few years before could really have been accessory to the evil thing which his keepers undoubtedly did.

As to Lord Londonderry, he was as young as myself, and we soon became friends again.

It was at Newburgh Priory that I think I first met Lady Londonderry, and among the guests at dinner was Maria Marchioness of Ailesbury, with curls of various colours on her forehead, and any amount of amusing talk.

I remember that I was then seriously interested in

the late Lord Shrewsbury, whose introduction of improved hansoms had much impressed me, and he was being socially ostracised at that time for unfortunate domestic events. I tried to reason with his sister that he should be forgiven, but she would not admit such a possibility. And yet, as I came to know in later years, she was one of the kindest-hearted and best of women, never weary in well-doing, and always keen on blood-stock breeding.

Year by year I used to get up mating competitions of blood stock, and Lady Londonderry would judge them. They were never for big prizes, but, I know well, were always enjoyed by readers of *The Sportsman* in all parts of the world.

It was very pleasant to visit Wynyard in the later days when the stud had assumed serious proportions and Moss had important prospective winners to show. Lady Londonderry herself delighted in the place, and particularly, I think, in her old-world garden, which was always beautiful. I remember so many landmarks surrounding the house and grounds—such, for instance, as a tablet recording in graceful verse the death of a little dog, the property of Lady Ilchester. I think Lord Crewe was the author.

It is indeed a delightful house, Wynyard, for when you are there you can do just what you like, without being worried by anyone trying to entertain you. For instance, on the occasion I have in mind, which was a Sunday morning, I set to and wrote an article about the Sledmere yearlings while the family had gone off to church. Of course I would have gladly gone too, but it was necessary to get through with the work.

Lady Londonderry was a very accomplished and well-

read woman and she knew a lot about blood stock. It was a matter of surprise to me when she changed the name of Christie Johnstone to Christie, not being aware of the title of Besant's novel which I had given to the mare as being a daughter of Sailor Lad. That, however, is a trifle, into which anyone might be entrapped.

The late Lord Londonderry was the staunchest possible Unionist, and he was about the strongest supporter of Sir Edward Carson in the trouble before the war. His son is equally staunch now, but I am not concerning myself with the present generation. I am thinking solely of the gracious lady and great sportswoman as well as of the very good man and nobleman her husband, who have gone to their account, and we shall be lucky—any of us—if we have at the finish so much to the credit as they had on the books of the recording angel.

Corcyra was the best horse they ever bred, but there were many other good ones. He had proved himself a successful sire at the time of his early death. His daughter, Blue Dun, is an amply sufficient memorial to him.

My mind is so full of pleasant memories that I am half afraid of becoming prolix. Still, at the present time, when the Lascelles family is so much before the public, it is not out of place to mention the Hon. George Lascelles, of Sion Hill, who was very well known with the Bedale and other North Yorkshire packs in the seventies and eighties. I knew him well in those days, and a delightful man he was to know; an always courteous sportsman. He rode good weight-carrying horses, though he did not at that period pretend to ride hard. Nor, for that matter, did his brother, the Hon.

Egremont Lascelles, who for a year or two was Master of the York and Ainsty, in succession to Colonel Fairfax. Of course, if a Master hunts hounds himself he has to go accordingly, but with a good huntsman he can take a much more comprehensive view of what is going on, just as a general who knows well that the forefront of the battle is not his place.

Among others of the Lascelles family was the Hon. Gerald Lascelles, who made a special study of hawking and became the greatest authority on the subject. I have always wondered that this sport has fallen into desuetude, for it must have been a very delightful one, and there are still many plains, wolds and downs on which it could be carried on. The present Lord Harewood is still, I am glad to say, in the land of the living, so he does not quite come in as a memory, but in just one way he does. A good many years ago I had been made the victim of a mix-up by Messrs Weatherby, having bought a mare called Pentecost at Albert Gate and entered her for sale at the Etablissement Cheri, Paris. Curiously enough, another mare named Pentecost, and purporting to be the same animal, was being advertised for sale by Tattersalls Français the following week, and the owner of this really bogus Pentecost took proceedings against the Etablissement Cheri for having advertised our mare. Nay, more, they succeeded in getting a judgment for, I think, £160 damages and costs.

Messrs Weatherby took our mare out of the *Stud Book* and remained impassive. I must add that this was prior to the present regime.

I knew well that our Pentecost was the right one, and that, as a matter of fact, she had been bought for France

but not paid for, and her export certificate had been transferred by the defaulting purchasers to another mare. I did my best with two successive senior stewards of the Jockey Club, one of whom was Lord Durham, to get Messrs Weatherby to straighten out the trouble, but the late Mr Edward Weatherby was like Gallio, who "cared for none of these things." Finally came Lord Harewood as senior steward, and he devised a scheme to which he got Mr Edward Weatherby to agree, and this was a memorable performance on the part of Lord Harewood.

The scheme was that if I could get the identity of Pentecost proved in a court of law she should be reinstated in the *Stud Book*.

It may be that my ability to bring about such a legal issue was doubted. But, before long, the late M. Halbronn, who was equally concerned with me, for he laboured under the imputation of having advertised our mare with a false pedigree, fell in with our plan of campaign that he should bring an action for damages against me for having induced him to offer a mare with a false pedigree; we should brief good counsel on both sides and divide the expenses.

So the case came on before the late Mr Justice Gainsford Bruce, and the identity of Pentecost was proved up to the hilt, as also that she had never left England. Judgment was given with costs against M. Halbronn, and Messrs Weatherby restored Pentecost to the *Stud Book*, after which the bogus Pentecost was removed from the *French Stud Book*. All this cost me and M. Halbronn a lot of money, to correct the *Stud Book*, and Pentecost died soon afterwards, but the *Stud Book*—French and English—would never have been corrected

in this particular had it not been for the Earl of Harewood.

Lord Harewood has owned not a few good horses in his time, and Minstead, after winning the Middle Park Plate, seemed likely to prove the best of his year, but he came to grief in the spring of his three-year-old season. His half-brother, Cantilever, was a more solid success and did wonderfully well in 1913, when as a three-year-old he beat Tracery for the Jockey Club Stakes and, later on, won the Cambridgeshire, though he was coughing and had a temperature. He carried 7 st. 12 lb. that day—a big weight for a three-year-old—and it was on Lord Harewood's own judgment that he ran, although his jockey had been given up, and he was ridden in the race by his stable boy.

I have many pleasant memories derived from the working of the old Sporting League in the early and mid nineties. Nothing was more to my mind than the campaign which we carried on against Mr John Burns, after he had expressed his desire to see all race-courses ploughed up.

A very large number of his constituents in Battersea were railwaymen working on the South Western and Brighton lines, and it was easy to send leaflets to them all explaining how Mr Burns desired to stop the race traffic and thus turn them out of work. This had a very great effect, and in an election which took place about that time Mr Burns came very near to being beaten, and was, in consequence, extremely angry.

Then followed events which are sufficiently recorded in the following copy of a hand-bill circulated in Battersea some time before a later election :—

Electors of Battersea!

Read the following letters and take notice of the fact that "the retired Army Officer" who was willing to accept the

VAIN-GLORIOUS CHALLENGE of Mr JOHN BURNS

WAS THE LATE

Major H. S. DALBIAC, who led the Middx. Yeomanry into Senekal

And was shortly afterwards KILLED at the head of his Men.

This is the class of Man whom Mr Burns

REVILED, BUT DARE NOT MEET,

Whom he described as a "gilded popinjay."

Prove by your Votes at this Election that the memory of what MAJOR DALBIAC was willing to do, and what he did, has helped to defeat the

BUMPTIOUS BRAGGART

at the Polls, though he shirked standing to his own Challenge and meeting the living man.

Speaking at Battersea on the 10th August, 1895, Mr John Burns, M.P., made use of the following words, among others, in regard to the Sporting League, and in effect issued a challenge:—

"I am almost inclined to say to the Sporting League, *that if they would select one of their members over 36 years of age, I would be almost prepared to measure their and my appreciation and practice of English Sports by being willing to test his prowess at cricket, football, running, rowing, walking, tennis, boxing, skating, or wrestling.* There is one insuperable drawback to this, and that is, you could not wrestle with a Sporting League sweep without being covered with dirt, and as pigs cannot be encountered without covering one's self with mire, I leave them to themselves, as sport is degraded by association with their name. Their object is to encourage gambling, the bane of true sport, and to foster the cursed betting and gladiatorial instincts that, whenever allowed to dominate the old English games, has either discredited or killed them.

In reference to this challenge Mr Burns very soon received the following:—

To John Burns, Esq., M.P.

SIR,—My attention has been called to a speech of yours, made in Battersea Park, in which you are reported to have said that, but for "the contempt" which you feel for the members of the Sporting League, you "would issue a challenge to box, row, run and jump any one of them—the boxing to be done first."

I write to ask if it would not be possible to temporarily smother your contempt in the interest of your constituents, for under proper management such a competition as you suggest would draw a large "gate," which could be distributed among the poor of Battersea.

I have no desire to overmatch you, and would nominate to compete with you a retired army officer over forty-five years of age, height 5ft. 9in. He was badly shot through the body at Tel-el-Kebir, and though an ex-member of the service which consists, according to your view, of "popinjays," he would, I think, suffice for our purpose.

I shall be glad to hear from you on the subject, and the sooner the matter is brought to a head the better. Yours, etc., W. ALLISON (Hon. Sec. Sporting League).

46A, Pall Mall, S.W., August 14, 1895.

The above letter was published in every paper in England, and the following also went the rounds of the Press:—

MR BURNS, M.P., AND THE SPORTING LEAGUE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING ADVERTISER."

SIR,—I have been requested by a private gentleman to offer a cup, of the value of 100 guineas, in the contest between Mr Burns, M.P. and the representative of the Sporting League, if Mr Burns will screw up his courage for the match. I am, Sir, yours, &c., E. T. KEENAN.

4, Edward-street, High-street, Deptford.

Notwithstanding the publicity given to the above letters, and the innumerable comments on them, Mr Burns did not venture to stand to his words. He lay low and preserved discreet silence, so he in due time became the recipient of the following letter, which was also widely published:—

46A, PALL MALL, S.W., AUGUST 26, 1895.

SIR,—On the 14th inst., I sent you a letter in which I indicated that your suggestion of a series of contests between yourself and a member of the Sporting League was acceptable to us and could be carried out with much material advantage to the poor of Battersea.

As you have not thought fit to reply, I am forced to the conclusion that you are deficient both in courtesy and courage, and that not even the prospect of honestly earning £1000 or more for your constituents will induce you to incur any personal risk.

In a report of your speech of the 10th inst., in which you issued your provisional challenge, you are stated to have used the following words in reference to the Sporting League:—

> "This association of racecourse touts and glorified potwallopers, the dregs of the betting and gambling world, played an active part in the election, and specially against myself. . . . Sport is degraded by association with their names. . . . Their object is to encourage gambling and to foster the cursed betting and gladiatorial instincts."

It may be well, in connection with the above, to place on record the names of the Executive Council of the Sporting League to whom your remarks were applied:—The Earl of Coventry, the Earl of Durham, the Earl of Lonsdale, Sir James Forrest, Bart., the Earl of March, Right Hon. James Lowther, M.P. Lord Hawke, Hon. J. Scott Montagu, M.P.

It will not, I think, be denied by any impartial critic of your observations purporting to describe these gentlemen, that, however low you may rank in regard to those physical attributes which you have so vaingloriously claimed, you may safely challenge the world to compete with you in mendacity and insolence. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, W. ALLISON (Hon. Sec. Sporting League.)

JOHN BURNS, ESQ., M.P.

Comment on the above is needless. The Battersea Electors, or any other British Electors, can form but one opinion on Mr Burns' conduct.

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The above was not the first occasion on which we had used this remarkable story against Mr Burns, and it is quite true that the late Major Dalbiac ("The Treasure") was prepared to take him on in any conceivable contest. After the correspondence had been published in *The Times* and all other papers, Sir Claude de Crespigny also sent in his name as being desirous of taking a hand in the game, and Mr Burns was in a remarkably tight place, for the original challenge had been his own and perfectly gratuitous.

He took refuge in the policy of "Brer Rabbit"—that is, "he lay low and said nuffen."

Those were great times, and the Sporting League made things hum very pleasantly, not only in Battersea, but in many another constituency where anti-gamblers and spoil-sports raised their hateful heads; but I have not the space in which to further detail such alarums and excursions. Maybe one is too old to go in for them again now, but there is always crying need for strong, organised resistance to all Puritanical attacks on individual Liberty, whether such attacks are engineered by the former enemies, such as John Hawke, Bevan, Mrs Ormiston Chant, Alpheus Cleophas Morton, or, in these later days, by Pussyfoot Johnson and his teetotal accomplices.

I have mentioned Major Dalbiac in connection with the John Burns challenge, and that leads me almost irrepressibly to a pugilistic affair at the back of the stands of the Grange Fort Galloway Meeting (Portsmouth) while a race was being actually run. Major Dalbiac used to control the meeting, and it was a very successful one of its sort. It was in the beginning of June 1889, and my first experience on entering the

paddock was that I was nearly ridden over by Major Harding Cox on an animal called The Usher, which, although failing to win, had nevertheless insisted on going another complete circuit of the course, and would have gone yet another had not his jockey sought relief by turning him into the paddock entrance, which I also had gone into about half-a-minute before. Hearing the noise, I jumped aside and evaded the danger, but The Usher pursued his wild way through the paddock and to the entrance to the stand, where the top of the turnstile was missing, and somehow the horse squeezed through, knocked old "Chippy" Norton off his stool on the other side, and was only stopped by the rails to the course, which caused him to slip up on his haunches, and enabled Major Harding Cox to dismount.

This, however, was as nothing to what happened afterwards. The incident was one which it would seem unkind to mention in these later days were it not that, to my certain knowledge, the parties immediately concerned—that is to say, My Lord and My Lady—regarded it as of no serious importance at all, and when I saw them together at a Plumpton Meeting within a year of the event, they laughed heartily at "that little episode" at the Grange Meeting, and expressed pleasure at the way in which I had versified it.

Post-war morality may find nothing strange in this, and, at any rate, the facts which may be gleaned from the idyll (?) are basic truth. Major Dalbiac and I were alone present when the first encounter took place, for he had got wind of the trouble and told me. Everyone else was watching a race.

Now here is an accurate story of what happened, idealised as to characters and individuals, but in no

respect whatever altered from what actually happened in my presence:

"*St Stephen's Review*," 15*th June* 1889.

THE AILESBURY DUCK

An Idyll of The Moated Grange

A dream; a flash of old-world fantasies,
When the fresh earth nourished a noble race
Of men who knew the worth of womanhood,
And women who were ever womanly.
Oh, Chivalry! Oh, dim and distant days,
When beauty's smile was all the warrior's prize,
And death was courted for a lady's sake!
Must we then darken to our dismal doom
With nought save memories to gild the past?
. . . . . .
It may not be; thank Heaven it is not so;
For he, most notable of England's Peers,
The Lord of Ailesbury, has stemmed the flood
Of this ingrate and base material age:—
Alone unarmed upon the foughten field,
His Queen of Beauty he has bravely won
And borne her homeward, as her own true knight.
. . . . . .
For so it fell that Dorothea fair,
Whom some called Dolly, for the love of her,
Held court with Ailesbury at Maidenhead,
And gaily passed the witching hours away
With tales of him the Knight of Abington,
Whose folly pledged him to a woman's faith,
With costly issue. But anon there came
One known as Riley, and abode with them,
Devising evil. He in other years

Had served his Queen 'neath Indian sunny skies,
But gained small honour, hurtled from his horse,
What time o'er hurdles he was matched to ride;
And much distressed by deadly boxing gloves,
Tempting such hazard in a later day.

. . . . . .

He, while the Lordly Ailesbury, enthralled
With noble thoughts, was planning noble deeds,
Bore the sweet Dolly forth from out the Hall,
Nor stayed his wicked way till, far from ken,
In Southsea rooms he hid the shrieking fair.
There held he her, the victim of his will,
And smiled in bitter and in bilious spite
At thought of Ailesbury, the peerless Peer.

. . . . . .

Full fourteen days and fourteen direful nights
Had passed and Riley still held rule; but she
Longed for the outer day and spoke him thus:
"My Lord—for I am fain to call thee lord—
Methinks the revels of the Moated Grange
Befall to-morrow. Let us thitherwards;
The gentle knight of Dalbiac will be there—
Surnamed 'The Treasure,' for his preciousness—
And all is ordered well for merry sport."
Then he, not loth for change—"Ay, let us go!"

. . . . . .

And so it fell that when the morrow's sun,
Obscured by clouds, had ushered in the day,
They to the Grange, with all the gladsome throng,
Hied and were happy, for 'twas good to see
The racing ponies and the gentlehood
Of all the country-side assembled there.

. . . . . .

The raging Ailesbury, with instinct fine,
Bred all of purity, had made his quest,
Unceasing since her loss, for his dear love;
And on this day, by prayer and penance shrived—
His mind more subtile than the sons of earth—
He saw, in spirit, where indeed she was,
And sped to save her. To the Grange he came,
Nor recked of rules which bade him not be there.
Peerless and proud he strode his onward course,
His flat hat seeming like a knightly helm,
And the box-coat with which he was enswathed
Presenting full resistance to the foe.
Led by the heart-read instinct of true love,
He pressed on straight to Dorothea; she
Sprang in amaze; but he, with quiet mien—
"Come hence a little, I would talk with you."
So went she forth obedient, and away
A certain space and talked with Ailesbury.

. . . . . .

But Riley, who, on other things intent,
Had left the lady, now returned again,
And found her not; so started on the quest;
Nor sought he long, for soon he saw her there
With Ailesbury in converse; and he sped
Athwart the space, and the two heroes gripped.

. . . . . .

And now befell the deeds of derring-do,
Worthy of ancient time; for she was there,
The Queen of Beauty, and the victor's prize,—
Though much she doubted which she wished to win,
And with umbrella strove to stay the blows.—
They, madly wrathful, beat the empty air,
With dread intent but little injury;

And each grew weak with rage and bitterness.
Then rushing came the Knight of Dalbiac,
And bade them cease, and greatly menaced them
For brawling on his peaceful Moated Grange;
And up there dashed the myriad populace
To see the battle; but the champions twain,
Hurtled apart, were spared from further strife.

. . . . . .

The Noble Ailesbury secured his Dame,
And led her all in triumph to the room
Where ladies are ordained to leave their cloaks,
Then sang he to her thus a trifle song—

Sweet, come with me;
  Let no one else enmesh you
This eau-de-vie (*giving brandy and water*)
  Will very much refresh you.

I care not, I,
  For Riley; he will miss you;
Perchance he'll sigh,
  But I alone shall kiss you (*does so*).

But raging Riley hovered near the door,
Aflame for further fighting, till it fell
That wiser counsels in the mind prevailed,
And he went thence to seek reviving drink.
Then Dalbiac's knight the welcome signal gave,
And forth fared Ailesbury, victorious Peer,
With her, the tribute to his chivalry,
His "Dolly," won by his own stalwart hand;
And in conveyance of prosaic sort
They sat, and so were hurried right away,
Nor know we what befell them as they went;
But he who tells the tale declares that they

Were much esteemed for spotless innocence,
And all refinement of nobility,
And full of virtue lived their lovely lives.

. . . . . .

But Riley, walking on the second day,
Sought Portsmouth bookstall, and before his eyes
There loomed a volume, with the title dire—
Dolly: A Love Story; so he turned and fled,
And of his fate the world has heard no more.

"BLINKHOOLIE."

I think the above true story, which is true even to the *Dolly: A Love Story* on the bookstall, is amusing to remember, and yet it is in a sense sad, for the cause of all the trouble in the particular case in question was Abington Baird, who had no redeeming point except that he rode fairly well on the flat. He was so full of money that he could not, reasonably speaking, spend it all in his lifetime. He ruined the pugilistic crowd by spoiling them, and he may have owed his death to that, but as regards women his injury was no less fatal, through sheer bulk of money. I am thankful still to know that while I was running *St Stephen's Review* I never feared to write the most virulent paragraphs about him, and then go to lunch at Romano's, where his pugilist friends used to forgather. I don't quite know why, but none of them ever troubled me—indeed I was good friends with them but not with him.

Poor little "Dolly Tester" was a vastly better sort than her husband, and an immeasurably better sort than the men concerned in the base conflict for her and something like £50,000, originating from Mr Abington.

I don't like to write more about it, though I know she would not mind, but what I have written will perhaps suffice to explain the above verses, the satire in which, I am glad to say, they did not understand. So much for "Meminisse Juvabit."

CHAPTER XXVIII

WHEN THE HEART WAS YOUNG

A Joyous Memory—The Offensive Gates—Between Coxwold and Thirsk—Methods of destroying them—Failures—An Explosive Scheme—An Embryo Parson assists—Midnight Descent from Window—York Minster Bell-rope—Ignorance of Blasting—Another Failure—Learning how to blast—Getting there at last—Charging the Gate-posts—The Fizzing Fuse—Glorious Success—Again, and yet again—Shattered Ruins—Safe Return—Never discovered

THIS book must now be advancing toward a conclusion, and I feel impelled to draw on my most youthful memories and describe one which will ever remain as a joy to me. That is the destruction of the gates on the road between Coxwold and Thirsk. I used to live at Coxwold Vicarage in those old days, and it chanced that between Coxwold and Thirsk, a distance of nine miles, the road was a very fair one, but for three obstacles, and thereby hangs the present tale.

The obstacles were in fact three gates, which by some mysterious ancient right, whereof the memory of man knew not the contrary, a certain Mr Peckitt, whom I well knew, was entitled to keep. His son, Leonard Peckitt, owned Catalogue, on whom Martin Gurry won a race at Thirsk. Mr Peckitt was entitled, as it seemed, to bar the passage of all mankind along this road unless such mankind got down from his conveyance, of whatever sort, and opened them.

Absolutely purposeless were these gates. It is true,

enclosing, as they did, about two miles of the road, Mr Peckitt, who owned the land on both sides of the road, was enabled to let the roadside grazing for a sum of about thirty shillings per annum, to such owners of cattle who affected for their beasts such precarious sustenance.

But Mr Peckitt was a rich man, and thirty shillings a year was useless to him, while to the mass of mankind these gates were a source of dire rage, cursing, swearing and all manner of evil; especially if perchance one was driving alone, with a lively horse, when it became necessary to choose between two evils—either to keep holding the gate open, and trust your horse to chance till he got through, whereupon he probably ran away; or else, in your efforts not to lose the horse, you let the gate swing upon your trap with consequent damage. You could not possibly lead the horse and hold the gate—at least not long enough to get clear, for they shut automatically.

That was the position at the time I am dealing with, and I, who had been studying Bentham, concluded that the destruction of the gates would be for the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

The village butcher instructed me and a friend in a method of destroying gates, and the method was a good one, which, with a less determined man than Mr Peckitt, would have availed. He, however, was ancient and pig-headed, and steadfastly purposed to assert his right in defiance of all men. The manner of the plan was this: to open wide the gate, having first procured a large stone; then to insert your stone between the gate-post and the heel of the gate, about half-way down; then to pull the gate to, whereby the hinges are drawn from the post. So great is the leverage you can thus apply against the stone that failure is impossible; only, of

course, your stone must be large enough, otherwise it will fall down or the gate shut on it without result. Very many times did I and my companion, in journeyings between Coxwold and Thirsk, perform this feat and lay the disabled gate by the roadside.

But the owner was not to be easily defeated, and having procured more powerful hinges, he had them riveted on the other sides of the posts, thinking that, so, their removal was impossible. In this he was right; but, inasmuch as the leverage power compelled something to give way, these extra precautions only resulted in the gates themselves breaking right in two, whence arose much more damage and trouble in repairing.

Nevertheless, the indomitable owner stuck to his work, and even caused placards to be printed of "Five Pounds Reward.—Whereas some evil disposed person or persons did on or about the day of —— unlawfully and maliciously, etc., etc."

But detection of the offenders did not ensue. Nay, we even tore down the offending structures once more the very night after this proclamation was issued, and, this time, with immense labour, conveyed them far away. This we did by keeping one end of the gates on the foot-board of the dogcart, and holding up the other end, until such time as we cast them into a deep ditch.

But still the owner returned to the charge. Due search was made for the gates and the lost were found and replaced.

So far this may seem, as Charley's Aunt would say, a "d——d silly story," but now comes the real point of interest—the time appeared to have come when something more decisive should be done to those gates,

and I decided that the best plan would be to blow up the gate-posts. My friend who had gone thus far with me was several years older than I, and refused to take part in such an adventure, but I enlisted his younger brother as a confederate. This individual is now a parson, so I will call him "Jack," so as to do him no harm.

The first thing "Jack" and I did was to go to York to purchase any necessary tools and materials at shops where we were not known. The principal requirement was a large auger, and this we easily procured; a rope was likewise necessary, for it was decided that the only safe way to go to business was by descending out of a bedroom window when everyone was in bed and the house locked up. This also was forthcoming, the vendor of the article assuring us that it was a portion of the very same rope that was then used for York Minster bells—a good omen, as we thought.

So then we returned home ready, as it seemed to us, to do the job at once, but very ignorant of blasting operations, as will be seen.

My older friend regarded the business with a good deal of alarm, and indeed I and "Jack" were not without some doubts as to the rope performance. It was easy enough, of course, but to go out by a rope in the night is a cheerless experiment.

We had made touch-paper of the old-fashioned sort, and had a couple of flasks of ordinary gunpowder, and some paper for wadding. The auger had been carefully secreted in an outhouse below.

For disguise we donned somewhat outrageous costumes. I was clad in white breeches, white stockings, and white canvas boating shoes, with a white towel

wrapped round my head, turbanwise. A gay-flowered dressing-gown was the top covering, and, to crown all, a pair of trousers tied round the neck, the rearmost part of which garments hung down behind, like some peculiar hood.

"Jack" tied round his head and ears a red spotted handkerchief, and was further draped in a flannel cricket suit, the shirt, however, being worn outside the trousers and a belt put over all. He had a red spotted handkerchief tied under his chin.

Needless to say, in such absurd garments we should have been stopped by the police, had there been any on the spot, but there were none in those happy days.

In this ridiculous guise we stood in the old Coxwold Vicarage in my room, when the Rev. George Scott—rest his soul!—had seen the household upstairs, bolted every door and entirely secured the establishment.

Slumber reigned supreme, save in my room, where my elder friend was nervous of some mishap, but "Jack" and I had no fear. The window was an old-fashioned one, divided into three separate parts, each part being, as may be supposed, somewhat narrow. The rope was fastened round one of the upright columns of the frame, which was very solid. The right-hand sash was drawn up, that being the side from which the egress had to be made so as to descend on to soft grass and miss the hard gravel walk. It was a dark night and my elder friend looked out and shuddered.

"Now then," said I, "have you got the matches, 'Jack'?"

"Yes."

"And I've got the flasks of powder and the touch-paper. There's nothing else?

"Then here goes," and, not without a trifle of extra heart-beating, I approached the window.

"You'd better not," said my elder friend feebly.

"Oh, nonsense! Give us a hand." And so the performance began.

It is by no means easy, however, to get out of a narrow window, feet first, especially when you are clad in a dressing-gown which rucks up and refuses to accompany you as you wriggle yourself forth. However, I did manage to emerge into the night, and was at last fairly aswing in the darkness.

First and foremost, then, the rope, stretched against the window frame, gave a mighty crack.

This was more than my older friend could bear.

"For God's sake," he hoarsely whispered, "come back, come back!"

By that time I had reached the ground, and "Jack" was very soon there also.

It must be mentioned that the particular window from which we emerged was a solitary one at the end of the house and not observable from other rooms.

The scared, wan face of our elder associate could now be just dimly descried peering out from above.

"Tie the rope up somewhere," he whispered, "else someone will come and climb in when you are away."

I laughed, and hoisted "Jack" on my shoulders, who secured the rope to a nail high up on the wall. The auger was now obtained—the yard gates climbed over—a by no means easy matter, as they had spikes on them—and we were off to the field of action. It was a nice fresh night—somewhat dark, for the moon had not yet risen; but the air had an invigorating sparkle about

it, admirably suited to stimulate the spirit of devilry which had taken hold on us.

There was an inclination, in the free ecstasy of the moment, to "whoop" and "tally-ho," run, jump—anything just to give vent to wild joy.

But caution had to be observed, for we were going along the regular Thirsk road and might meet someone.

Eagerly we pressed on to the first gate, some mile and a half distant, and it was soon reached. A hasty survey was made in all directions to see that no one was near, and then the work began.

Confusion! The post was as hard as iron; the auger would not make any way in it at all, even though pushed with the utmost force that we could apply.

We struggled, we toiled till the perspiration ran off our brows, first one taking a spell and then the other; but the massive old gate-posts were of the most seasoned oak, and were impregnable to such a tool as we were employing.

It was no use. Exhausted and dispirited, we were fain to return by the way that we came, mournfully reflecting on the failure. We found the ascent by the rope easy enough, for it was much more simple to go in head first than to come out feet first. The rope was drawn up and secreted, and all tokens of the intended crime were put aside; then bed and untroubled sleep, all these matters notwithstanding.

So ended the first attempt. But the project was by no means abandoned; only it was now seen to be one that demanded more care than was imagined.

As a result of this, I made a special journey to Middlesbrough, and there casually introduced the subject

of blasting in conversation with an iron stone friend, who soon told me all I wanted to know.

I found that, even if we could have bored a hole with the big auger, it would have been useless to fill it with paper or anything of that kind on the top of the powder. The explosion would merely, in such a case, have blown the paper out, as a gun does a wad, and left the gate-post unharmed. The best thing to do was, having made and charged the hole, to plug it up with a mixture of clay and tow, and, of course, to discard the ridiculous old touch-paper, which could not possibly burn through this compound, but to use ordinary string fuse, any amount of which could be easily procured, and it would burn through anything.

So then I returned, very much wiser in these particulars, and brought with me many yards of fuse and a centre-bit wherewith to bore several small holes in the posts, close together, and thus open out a way for the big auger to get to work.

The next day was spent in preparations, principally consisting in kneading up clay and tow together into a large, dough-like mass, and testing the length of fuse required to enable anyone to run two or three hundred yards before it was burned out.

A mallet and rammer were added to the list of tools, which were all placed ready in an outhouse, hidden behind some old wine-cases; and when the night came, and the good vicar had secured his establishment, when the innocent among the household were asleep, then once again was enacted the scene already described, with safety as before, and with less perturbation on the part of our still reluctant senior.

I had the powder and clay in my dressing-gown

pockets, and carried the big auger and the mallet in my hands. "Jack" carried the centre-bit and rammer, while in his pocket was the box of matches.

It was really difficult to scale the spiked yard doors with all these impediments, but it was done, and we were fairly on our way, this time with very different prospects of success.

We had not progressed far before we heard the sound of approaching steps, and presently we met the village doctor, a timorous little man, who was walking home after seeing a patient. There was a moon that night and it was certainly foolish to give him any unnecessary chance of recognition; but the inducement to frighten him was irresistible, and I sprang toward him with a weird and horrible yell, as we were passing, waving the big auger, like some strange weapon, in the air. The doctor did not stay for more, but ran for his life, and we had a hearty laugh as we heard his little feet pattering away in the distance.

But the first gate was soon reached, due investigation of the neighbourhood made, and then to work. The centre-bit drill is not to be denied, even by such oak as this, and presently three holes are made in close proximity, midway down the post on which the gate is hung. Now for the big auger. Hurrah! it bites! Started in the midst of the three above-mentioned holes, it finds the way thus partially prepared for it; and forcibly pressed on and turned, it soon gets a hold on the wood, and wins its way inexorably in, despite the desperate hardness.

I turned till I had made a good depth of full two inches, and then stopped for breath. The metal of the auger was then too hot to touch, so severe was the work

it had been doing. "Jack" carried on the game; then I again; and at last seven or eight inches were penetrated. This was thought enough.

Now for the powder!

The hole had been bored in a slightly downward direction, so that the charge ran easily into it until it was full within three inches of the outside.

Where was the fuse?

There all right. See that it is stuck well into the powder, and then fall to with the clay and tow. Ram it in hard; beat it in with mallet on rammer! Do this to the very utmost of possible capacity, lest by any chance it be blown out and the gate-post remain unhurt. There, we can make no better of it. It is all ready to be fired; so let us on to the next gate, for we must have the three charged first, and then enjoy the sport as we go home.

It is really like a last night's adventure while I recall this—a walk of a mile, and another post operated on; then on to the last, and behold all is now ready. The work has taken between two and three hours; but it is done and, with hearts beating, we approach the climax.

A strict search is made to make sure that no one is near; for it would never do to have an accident. The place is still as death, and not a footfall sounds upon the road. All is safe. The moon casts a sickly light upon the scene, and the doomed gate, hanging on its condemned post, looms out against the background of white road, almost preternaturally large, and, as it were, instinct with ghostly life.

"Jack" holds the match-box.

"Give it me," I cried, trembling with excitement, "and be getting away."

("Jack" was some years my junior.)

He moves off, and I strike a match. It goes out, and the suspense is prolonged. Now another. This one burns bravely; it is touching the fuse. Fizz! the fuse is lighted. Away we run down the road as hard as we can go, while the steady fizzing of the fuse still sounds in our ears. We have got some two hundred yards and must needs look back. There it is, spitting its sparks yet! It is a supreme moment watching those sparks, and expecting the event, with nerves strung to the utmost tension. Will it never come? There it is! And with a terrific report and a blaze of light the thing is done, and all is still.

On this we rush frantically back to the spot to see what has resulted. There is the gate in fragments over the road, and the post, split in four, lying in the form of a Maltese cross! Nothing could be better. We hastily clear the road, so that it may be safe for traffic, and then away in breathless haste, for the outraged Peckitt must have heard this even in his bed, which is not far off, and with his myrmidons may be nigh at hand.

Soon the next victim is reached, and the match deftly applied; once more the flight, and the delirious joy of expectation, as the squib-like fuse spits on. Bang! What a noise! By Jove! what is that? Something went whizzing overhead, and fell on the road beyond us, but we heed it not now, so intent are we to see the state in which the gate has been left. This post has been shattered to fragments and lies, none can say where; but the gate itself is on the road, not much injured. No matter; throw it into the ditch, out of the way, and come on.

Two or three hundred yards down the road "Jack" stumbles over something.

"What on earth is that?"

"Why, I do declare that it's an immense piece of the gate-post, that has been blown right over our heads just now. My word, if this had hit one of us it would have made rather a mess!"

Such was our converse while running on to our last mine, the one nearest home. This piece of post flying so far was somewhat alarming, especially as I knew that the fuse we had now to deal with was the shortest of the three.

"We must run like anything the instant I light this," said I, as in some apprehension I addressed myself to the task and "Jack" stood anxiously by.

It so happened that, in charging this post, we had dropped a good deal of powder on the ground, and some malicious sprite chose to direct a spark from the match among it; instantly it flared up in a most lurid manner.

I was just about lighting the fuse, and the only thing that occurred to both of us was that the fuse had somehow gone wrong, burnt off all at once, and that the explosion was taking place. Panic-stricken by this, we fled wildly away; but the sudden glare of powder had left us for a moment or two quite blind and the result was we both rushed headlong into a ditch, where we lay for a brief period wetted and bemired. Presently we ventured to look out, and all was still. Finally we dared to approach the gate.

There was everything as we had left it: the fuse untouched and the explosion still a thing of the future.

Somewhat foolish we felt, but neither could laugh at the other, and no one had seen us, so business was quietly resumed, and this time efficaciously.

There was another brilliantly excruciating period as

we sped away, thinking every instant to hear that glorious bang; and then when it came, in all its magnificence, another inspection of the shattered ruins, and away home, very careful to clear away the debris, and take with us all the paraphernalia of our work.

So ended a memorable performance, the fame of which remains in North Yorkshire to this day, for those gates were never replaced.

In a sense, it seems trivial, yet it contained elements of excitement unequalled by anything that I have experienced before or after. What was done was no mere wanton damage, but for the benefit of the whole neighbourhood. We got home all right, and all the tools were carefully hidden; then up the rope we climbed, put that and everything else straight and went to bed, after telling our cautious senior what had been done—not that he needed to be told, for he had heard all the reports.

Everything was so well managed that when, a day or so later, Mr Peckitt hinted to Mr Scott, the vicar, that he suspected us of having perpetrated this grievous deed, the worthy vicar warmly assured him that such could not be the case, as he had himself seen us go up to bed that very night; had himself locked the house, and all remained as he left it till next morning.

I, who came in while this conversation was proceeding, expressed indignation at Mr Peckitt's suggestions, and assured him that I had gone up to bed at eleven on the night in question, and not come *downstairs* till breakfast-time next morning (which was in fact true). The aggrieved gentleman was in this way utterly bemused; but he was a good sort in all other respects, except in his fad for those gates. He had posters put up offering

£10 reward for the discovery of the "evil disposed person or persons" who had destroyed the gate-posts, and the night after those posters appeared we went out and blew up the three remaining posts—those on which the gates used to close. Thus ended the gates, for the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

CHAPTER XXIX

SOME NOTABLE BREEDERS AND FINIS

Lord Rosebery's Great Double—The Paraffin Blood—His three Derby Winners—The Original Ladas—King Edward's Breeding Successes—A Memory not wholly pleasant—Perrier, and what came of him—Other Memories of King Edward—"Old Kate"—Lord Marcus and the Mating of Vane—Lord Marcus at Sheriff Hulton—Lord Derby's Successes—The Messrs Joel—Lady James Douglas—The Duke of Portland and Welbeck—Lord Astor—Final Words

THIS book is dedicated to Lord Rosebery, for he is the only living man who has bred three Derby winners, and, what is more, was the Prime Minister on the occasion of the first victory.

The scene when Lord Rosebery led in Ladas was almost equal to that when the Prince of Wales (King Edward) led in Persimmon. It is pleasant indeed to remember those scenes, and yet Lord Rosebery, in his early days on the Turf, had but few of Fortune's favours. I remember him making a speech in which he alluded, with his full felicity, to the fact that he had started three runners for the Derby and they had finished first, second and third—in the very last places. I saw that Derby, and also the one of 1874, when his Couronne de Fer ran second to George Frederick, beating Atlantic into third place. Couronne de Fer, however, was not quite sound in his wind.

It was the acquisition of Paraffin (by Blair Athol out

of Paradigm) that laid the foundation of Lord Rosebery's great successes.

Unfortunately Lord Rosebery is an invalid now and spends most of his time at The Durdans. There he has the finest collection of old horse pictures in the world. He has always been a staunch friend of Epsom and in very many ways done good to the place. A man of the highest ability and culture, he is the finest speaker in England and was always a keen sportsman of the best sort.

His classic successes have not been confined to the Derby, for he won the Oaks in 1883 with a home-bred one, Bonny Jean, and that branch of the Agnes family has produced other good winners for him. So, too, did Vista (dam of Bona Vista), she being by Macaroni out of Verdure by King Tom, and being one of the famous Mentmore mares, descending from Alice Hawthorn.

It does not seem very many years since Lord Rosebery entertained me, John Corlett, and three or four others at The Durdans, to see the first Ladas yearlings, but it was in fact in 1898. They were magnificent colts, and what we all wrote about them raised such expectations that when they were prostrated by influenza the following year, and could do little or nothing, their sire came in for unjust condemnation. One of them, however, was Epsom Lad, and he ultimately proved to be the best of his year.

Lord Rosebery is certainly the doyen of blood-stock breeders, and he is, as already stated, the only living man who has bred three Derby winners. Others have owned two—the Duke of Portland, for instance—and Mr J. B. Joel bred two, Sunstar and Humorist—and he is young enough to breed others—but, so far, Lord

Rosebery holds the platform, and there is no reason why he should not continue to hold it, for he will, I hope, see the produce of Spion Kop, from his best mares, making a great mark on the Turf.

When I was at school, Lord Rosebery was at Christ Church, Oxford, and owning a Derby horse, Ladas, at that time. I remember well looking up to him with reverence.

This original Ladas was not much use, and it says much for Lord Rosebery that he ever ventured to give another and obviously good horse the same name, which he did long years after, and won the Derby with him—perhaps the most really artistic triumph ever gained in connection with the Derby, for he brought off the double event of becoming the Prime Minister and winning the Derby. There was a tremendous reception when he led in Ladas on that occasion, and it was, of course, more than equalled when the Prince of Wales led in Persimmon two years later; but never was there such a reception as when King Edward led in Minoru, and that was because he was the King.

Lord Rosebery, as we have seen, has owed his success mainly to Paraffin (by Blair Athol), whose daughter, Illuminata, produced Ladas, Chelandry, Gas (dam of Cicero and other winners). Others have come from the Agnes family, through Bonnie Agnes, and some of the old Mentmore breed did well for him. No man has ever taken a more genuine interest in blood-stock breeding or more fully understood the merits of a great trainer like Mathew Dawson, though in his early days he was a long time before he made good. Lord Rosebery, though something of an invalid now, is still young enough to breed one or two more Derby winners and thus defy posterity to defeat him.

I have mentioned King Edward, and he was a very successful breeder up to a point, Volodyovski, Persimmon and Diamond Jubilee being a sort of record in their way, but there was some kind of original sin in their dam, Perdita II., which has come out again and again in some of their progeny, and been the bane of those who had to train them. Some, of course, like Sceptre, have been perfect, and the same can be said of Zinfandel and others such, but the fact remains that there were many great fine sons of Persimmon who flattered only to deceive. And hereby hangs a tale, which I tell now for the very first time. It will serve as a warning to all and sundry who write for papers to be very wary as to what they write.

It was in the spring of 1908, at the first Spring Meeting, and his Majesty's beautifully bred colt Perrier, by Persimmon out of Amphora (sister to Sundridge), was expected to win the Two Thousand Guineas. Even the Perrier people had a picture of him done as an advertisement, and they have used it ever since. In fact, there was general excitement about Perrier, and when I was told, on what I deemed sure authority, that the King himself had £500 on the colt, I was foolish enough to scribble it down in my notes, which you could then wire off from the course.

That evening, when too late, I thought I had made a bad mistake. Why should not the King back his colt if he liked? But why should I record the fact to a public poisoned with Nonconformist conscience, the King being supposed to be an equal head of all?

When I got the paper next morning, it read worse than I thought it would, and I knew that I was in for trouble. I went down in due time to the paddock

and, as I anticipated, one of the Messrs Weatherby courteously invited me into the Stewards' room. Lord Derby was senior steward, and the others were, I think, Captain Greer and Lord Durham.

There was, of course, no doubt about my having written the stuff, and I was roundly admonished by Lord Derby—and quite rightly. I told the stewards, and afterwards told Lord Derby in a letter, that his observations were less condemnatory than were my own feelings when I first read the paper that morning. They must understand that in the haste of wiring away messages which you had no opportunity to revise there might be regrettable incidents. Lord Derby said they understood that, and the question was closed without further trouble; except that for about two hours I felt that I had done such an unconscionably foolish thing that I had better give up writing altogether.

No one connected with *The Sportsman* has ever known of this, nor has anyone, so far as I am concerned. I have never told it even at home. As we read in Latin grammars, *Nemo Mortalium omnibus horis sapit.*

I put it in now for the edification of young journalists who are wishing to do good work. Let them never be rash in rushing what seems good copy into print. I explained what I did, but I could not excuse myself, for with my experience I ought not to have done it, and that is just what I said or wrote to Lord Derby, who made things all right with the King. It was a storm in a teacup, but it is perhaps better that I, in my lifetime, should tell the facts.

There is an old story of someone who boasted that King George IV. had spoken to him, and when pressed

to state what the King had said, he replied that the remark was, "Get out of the way!"

I don't think it amounted to that in my case—indeed I am sure that it did not—but what I wrote is a sample of what Mr Jorrocks would call "good awoidance."

I call to mind several amusing episodes in the racing career of King Edward. I was on the race-course side that morning of the Craven week when Persimmon was galloped alongside the flat and badly beaten by two Platers. The Prince's cob was standing by, and supposed, like all well-trained cobs at Newmarket, to never dream of moving off, but the defeat of Persimmon appeared to upset him badly, and away he went across the Heath kicking up his heels and pursued by Marsh and Lord Marcus Beresford on their hacks. A tout eventually caught him and he was brought back, but it was a disconcerting morning's work.

There was one occasion, after his Coronation, when King Edward had reached Newmarket by train, and, through some misunderstanding, a carriage was not there to meet him, whereupon he got into an ordinary fly and drove off, with whoever was in attendance, to the Jockey Club rooms. It is almost inconceivable that anybody at Newmarket should not know the King by sight, but that driver did not, and when his Majesty got down and walked hastily to the rooms, the man ran after him, under the impression that he was going to be "bilked." Of course he was quickly stopped and paid, nor—if still alive—is he at all likely to have forgotten what an absurd mistake he made.

One of his Majesty's most loyal subjects during all his lifetime was "Old Kate," but in the excitement of that feeling she did not study her words—"Good old

'Teddy'!" I have heard her cry more than once when there was a Royal victory, and surely no one could find fault with such an honest expression of delight, no matter how worded.

In fact "Teddy" was a name freely and heartily used when King, or Prince, had won a classic race.

It was, I think, at Doncaster, the crowd was such on the Leger day of either Persimmon or Diamond Jubilee, that H.R.H. had difficulty in getting to his horse to lead him in. On this, a posse of police constables surrounded him—to assist his progress—whereupon came a voice from the crowd: "Never mind, 'Teddy.' I'll come and bail you out!"

All this was taken in perfect good part, needless to say, and it only serves to show how King Edward was one with his people on a race-course, though no one was better able to preserve the dignity of a king on suitable occasions.

His present Majesty, King George, has not yet attained to such success as a breeder, but he will probably do so, and, even as I write, there are some hopes for Weathervane. Lord Marcus Beresford has, from the first, managed the Royal stud and stable, and I remember, when Vane, sister to Flying Fox, was purchased, he asked me if I thought mating her with Persimmon would be too close inbreeding. As Persimmon showed little of Galopin or St Simon character, I thought it would be all right, but the produce did not do much good. It is noticeable, however, that Weathervane is very much more closely inbred to Galopin and St Simon than anything by Persimmon out of Vane could have been.

Lord Marcus has done great work for two Kings, in

regard to blood stock, but he has still to produce a Derby winner for King George.

The last survivor of a truly sporting lot of brothers, the name of him recalls to me when, nearly fifty years ago, he was a young subaltern at York and, at Sheriff Hulton steeplechases, found — as he imagined — a bookmaker who had welshed him at some earlier meeting. I was there, and saw him set about this man properly, finally seizing his bag and scattering its contents to the winds. As a matter of fact, he had made a mistake of identity, and it resulted in his paying some hundred pounds to settle the matter; but that is the kind of man he was in those halcyon days.

It is a great pity, to my mind, that the old Hampton Court stud is not revived, and it would be well if the National stud could be removed to that establishment—at any rate nominally—so that the interest of the nation in it might be fully maintained. It cannot be claimed that the land on which Sainfoin, Memoir, La Flêche, Sierra and Best Man were reared is unsuitable; but, of course, it is easily possible to get more land than that of the old Bushey paddocks.

Lord Derby has one of the most successful and best studs of the day, wisely distributed at various centres, and both he and his father before him, as well as his grandfather, constitute great names on the Turf; but at present the Derby has eluded them. Canterbury Pilgrim and Keystone II. have won the Oaks; Canyon and Ferry have won the One Thousand Guineas, while Swynford and Keysoe have won the Leger. A Derby will come, no doubt.

Then there is Lady James Douglas, who has attained to immense success, in a few years, and herself bred the

triple-crowned Gainsborough, and Bayuda, winner of the Oaks, both by Bayardo. She has Gainsborough full at fee of 400 guineas, and might have had 50,000 guineas for him two years ago.

Mr J. B. and Mr S. B. Joel have done wonders in a comparatively short time—especially the former, who has produced at Childwick Bury two Derby winners, Sunstar and Humorist, four Oaks winners, one Two Thousand Guineas winner, two One Thousand Guineas winners, and two winners of the St Leger.

This is a really remarkable record, as against which Mr Solly Joel can only put up Pommern, with his trio of substitute classics. Nevertheless Mr S. B. Joel has bred many good winners in his time and owns the champion stallion, Polymelus, at his Maiden Erlegh stud.

It is almost needless to call to memory the great services rendered by Mr Edward Kennedy of the Straffan Station stud, Ireland, when he bought Roi Herode, and proceeded to open a new volume of Turf history, through the Tetrarch and others of the same line, a notable specimen of which is Grey Fox.

If I were the Duke of Portland, I should say "day by day" in regard to blood-stock breeding, "*Resurgam!*" for he was at one time by far the most successful of blood-stock breeders, and he won the Oaks no fewer than four times, with Memoir, Mrs Butterwick, Amiable and La Roche. Nobody could have done more than this, but the good fortune has not been maintained, and, if I might advise, the stud paddocks should be shifted to some other part of the Welbeck estate.

They were great days, however, when St Simon and Carbine stood at Welbeck, and, despite the incidence of

taxation, I believe there will be great days yet to come, though, since the death of William the Third, the glory has to some extent departed.

Lord Astor is another very successful breeder, and yet by paradoxical fortune deprived of success on the most vital occasions—as, for instance, when neither Buchan nor Craig an Eran could win the Derby or St Leger, and when the former was disqualified for the Ascot Cup. But, on the whole, Lord Astor has in a short time done wonderfully well.

This screed of a chapter, however, has no sort of pretence to give even an impression of the successful breeders of the present day, whom I have not mentioned earlier on.

It is just in my mind that I don't want to drop the subject and yet know I am reaching my limit of space.

Why, oh, why, has one written all this stuff?

Again I must blame Mr Grant Richards for being the evil demon who has impelled me into such a wilderness of musty antiquities and modern follies. The only excuse for the graceless work is that it is at every point based on bed-rock truth without any imaginative effort to embroider it.

I was blamed for not putting enough horse into the earlier book; this time I may be blamed for putting too much.

I don't know; and, without saying I don't care, I feel that I have too retentive a memory of the many experiences of a long life to write even a tithe of what might be best appreciated.

One gem, however, must remain, whether one writes well or ill, and that is always the Peerless British Thoroughbred.

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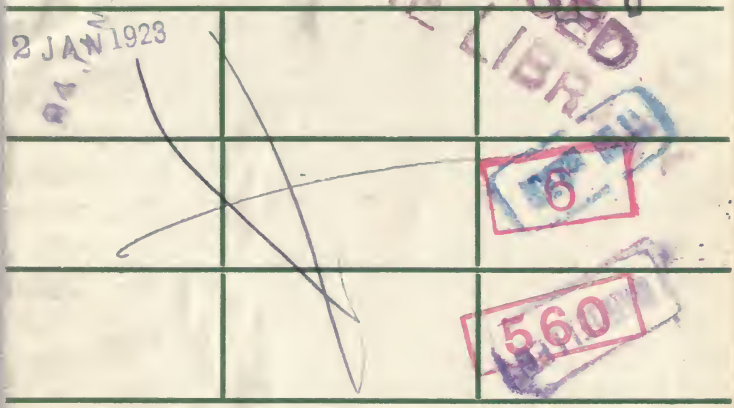

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